Bengaluru Sunday, September 14, 2025 Pages 20 Vol 78 No 255 ₹8

DH on Sunday

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DECCAN HERALD
The Power of Good

Defending champs India take on Pak in Asia Cup

Excitement as arch rivals face off today

P10

Travel *Page17*

Switzerland's hidden medieval pearl

Nestled in the Jura, St-Ursanne blends medieval charm, scenic views, and Swiss stillness

Art & Pursuits *Page18*

Delhi on the canvas

An ongoing art festival is looking at the capital as a living museum, weaving together heritage and archives

Books *Page15*

Grit and grind

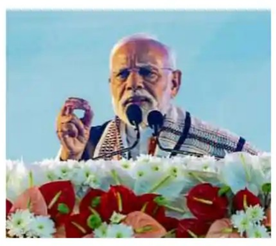
Christopher Clarey evocatively narrates Nadal's saga of sweat, scars and triumph, especially on the clay court

Food & Drink *Page16*

Heritage plated

Chefs and food historians are reviving forgotten recipes by blending nostalgia with innovation

Quickly



Manipur: PM for 'hills-valley' bridge of trust

In his first visit since the Meitei-Kuki conflict began in Manipur more than two years ago, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday stressed on building a strong "bridge of trust" between the hills and the Valley and assured that a new dawn of hope is on its way to the strife-torn state.
Details on Page 3

SC bats for homebuyers

The Supreme Court has said the Centre can't continue to be a silent spectator when the taxpayers' desire for a dream home is shattered. It directed the Centre to consider establishing a revival fund for stressed projects. The court said it would be thoroughly erroneous to treat home-buying as a mere commercial transaction.
Details on Page 6

Punish those buying Russian oil: US to G7

The US has asked G7 countries and NATO members to target Russia's oil trade, asserting that only "unified efforts" that cut off funding to Moscow's war machine at source can apply sufficient pressure to end "the senseless killing". It has asked the G7 countries to impose tariffs on countries purchasing oil from Russia.
Details on Page 3

India-Pak match: Oppn targets govt

On the eve of the India-Pakistan Asia Cup cricket match, several Opposition parties on Saturday slammed the BJP-led Union government, calling it an insult to the victims of the Pahalgam terror attack and the Indian soldiers who sacrificed their lives on the borders, with Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray announcing 'Sindoor' protests across Maharashtra.
Details on Page 7

A battle within the margins: The reservation dispute

The state government's reservation formula consolidates diverse communities but leaves many nomadic SC groups demanding more equitable representation

SUJAY B M
BENGALURU/KOPPAL/HOSAPETE, DHNS

The corridors of power buzzed with movement and intrigue at the Vidhana Soudha the night of August 19, as Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's Cabinet walked a political tightrope on the issue of internal reservation for Scheduled Castes.

Hundreds of police officers waited at the gates, as fears of backlash continued to build.

After hours of deliberation, the government decided to implement internal reservation in Karnataka by making 'necessary' changes to the Justice HN Nagamohan Das Commission report. The cabinet decided to adopt a 6:6:5 formula (with an overall 17% reservation available to SC communities in Karnataka), which was accepted by the three major stakeholders: the Holeyas, the Madigas and the SC group comprising Lambani, Bhovi, Korama and Koracha.

The fourth major section, comprising 59 nomadic, semi-nomadic and highly sensitive SC communities, was disheartened by the outcome. The Das Commission had classified SC communities into five groups (A, B, C, D, E).

INSIGHT

It grouped 59 sub-castes under group A, categorising them 'most backward' and recommended 1% of reservation be earmarked for them. The commission's formula was thus: A (1%), B (6%), C (5%), D (4%) and E (1%). However, the government's 6:5:5 formula consolidated the five groups into three, merging 59 communities with the Lambani, Bhovi, Korma, and Korcha communities under Group D, which the commission termed 'less backward' sections.

Overall, 17% of reservation is available for SC communities in Karnataka. In pic, women from the Chenna Dasara community at Ginigera in Koppal district. DH PHOTO/S PRASHANTH

With protests starting that very night, Freedom Park has since witnessed many nomadic communities demonstrating against the Karnataka government's decision. Many of those in attendance at these demonstrations have travelled in from across the state, despite financial difficulties. Nearly a month has passed, and after inconclusive talks with the government, the communities have continued their struggle and urged the government to implement the Das Commission report in its original form. In a show of strength, thousands of protestors staged a 'Bengaluru Chalo' walk on September 3 at Freedom Park. They served an ultimatum to the government, threatening to stop the Winter Session of Assembly in Belagavi if their demands were not met.

Distinct groups

It is well recognised that Dalits and Adivasis continue to be among the most disadvantaged in socio-educational and economic terms when compared to other Hindu castes. According to the Das Commission report, nearly 75% of Dalits still face untouchability in some form. Yet, the levels of deprivation are not uniform across Dalit communities.

▸ Quota stir, Page 2

Guidelines on humour: Protection or a tool of control?

Cruel humour that ridicules disability is wrong, but state regulation on humour and speech is dangerous

AVS NAMBOODIRI

Humour is well taken and is a part of life. We laugh at ourselves. But when we start laughing at others and create a breach of sensibility...on a community plane, when humour is generated, it becomes problematic. And this is what so-called influencers of today should bear in mind. They are commercialising speech. The community at large should not be utilised to hurt the sentiments of certain sections. It's not only freedom of speech, it's commercial speech," a Supreme Court bench said.

"Article 19... cannot overpower Article 21." Suppose a race takes place between Articles 19 and 21, Article 21 has to trump Article 19."

"Freedom of expression....cannot extend to commercial speech that offends or marginalises sections of society. Such expressions must come under scrutiny."

A Supreme Court ruling of August 25, which directed five social media influencers, including stand-up comedian Samay Raina, to issue public apologies for mocking persons with disabilities, contains the above observations from the bench. It is these observations which are actually problematic, not what they describe as problematic. The ruling contains a directive to the government to frame guidelines to regulate speech on social media. This directive presents even more problems than the observations.

DH ILLUSTRATION: **DEEPAK HARICHANDAN**

The **SUNDAY STORY**

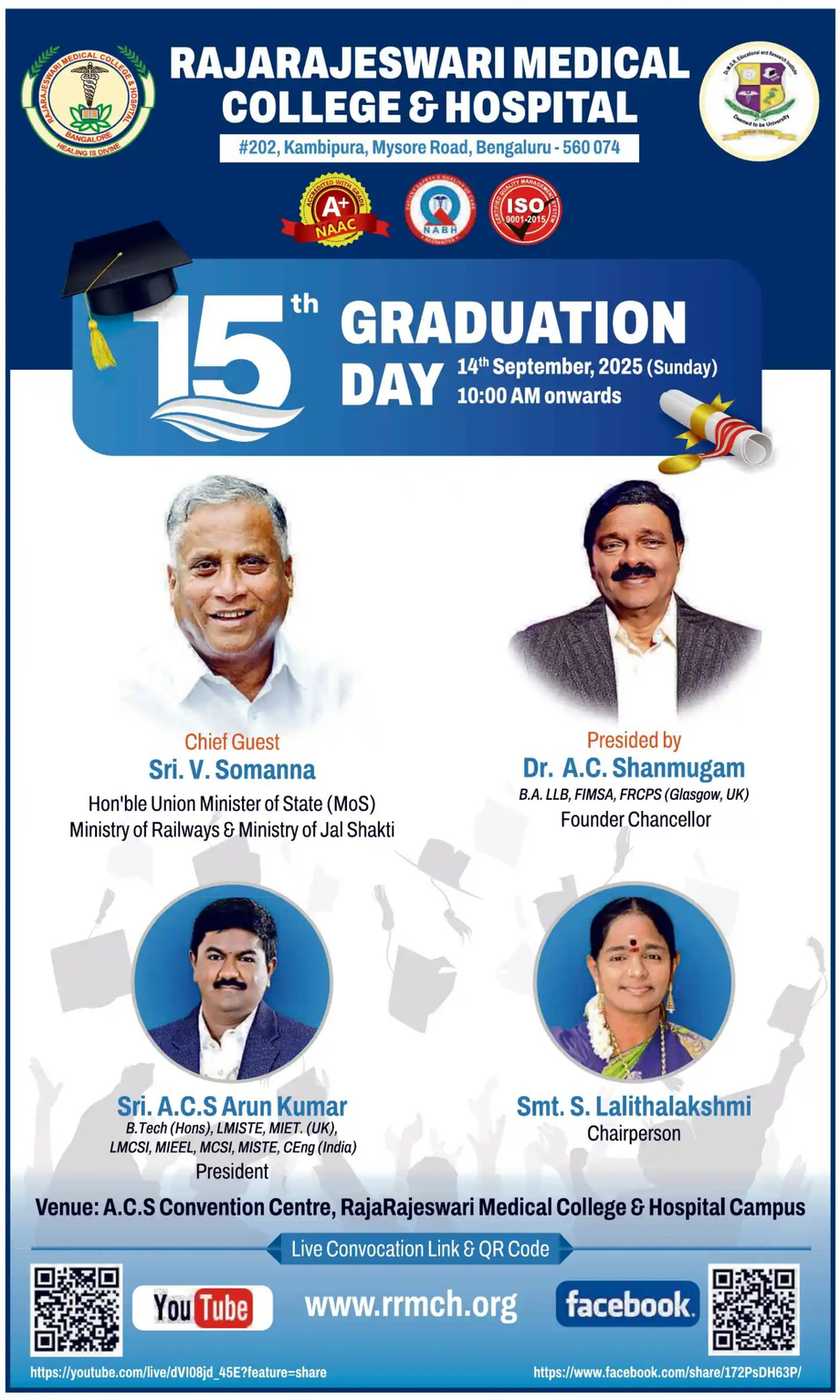
There are several formulations in these paragraphs which are fraught and contentious. One proposal is to restrain humour while claiming to accept its value. Another is to limit the scope of the right to freedom of speech and expression by positing it against another fundamental right — the right to life. If a distinction is sought to be made between humour that hurts and does not hurt, it is wrong.

It is certainly wrong to mock people with disabilities. Humour has to be human. But humour that is directed at a person with disabilities over a matter that has nothing to do with his or her disability cannot be said to be wrong. It cannot also be postulated that humour should not hurt the community. Humour, like art and literature and other expressions of freedom and creativity, has a function to hurt society.

It is a self-cleaning mechanism which society has developed to stay sane and healthy. This is a complex trait, and the law cannot lay down general principles about how to deal with it. Perhaps it can deal with individual cases of humour that can hurt or offend, as it has done now, on the basis of laws which already exist to protect individuals from unfair attacks. Of course, it is wrong to be insensitive, but the question is whether it is a legal offence to be so.

Humour is sometimes tasteless. But taste is a subjective quality. One person's taste differs from another's. The same is the case with dignity. Humour or criticism can sometimes hurt this sense of dignity, which is often connected with the right to life. That is probably why the court said Article 21, which pertains to the right to life, would trump Article 19, which pertains to free speech. This, too, is a faulty proposition since dignity, again, is a vague and subjective quality.

▸ Insensitive humour, Page 2



Untouchability continues to be a barrier

Quota stir, from Page 1

In its ruling in Davinder Singh vs State of Punjab, the Supreme Court observed that Scheduled Castes cannot be treated as a homogeneous group.

The Das Commission refers to this judgment, noting the findings of a study by the Robert F Kennedy Centre, which documented how practices of untouchability persist within Dalit communities — particularly in relation to food, water and religious life.

The Supreme Court's landmark ruling on August 1, 2024, opened the way for states to provide internal reservations within SC and ST categories. Following Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Haryana, Karnataka became the fourth state in the country to implement such a policy. The Das Commission highlights sharp disparities among the state's 101 Scheduled Caste groups.

Of the 6.33 lakh SC graduates in Karnataka, 4.49 lakh (71%) belong to four communities: Holeya, Madiga, Banjara and Bhovi. Similarly, of 7,516 MBBS graduates, 5,229 (69.57%) are from these same four groups.

By contrast, several nomadic communities of the 59 communities categorised as 'most backward' remain almost entirely excluded from higher education and professional opportunities. Fourteen of these communities have no engineers, 40 do not have a single MBBS graduate, and 54 have never produced a PhD holder.

The gap is visible even among nomadic groups. Of the four communities that *DH* studied closely, the Chenna Dasars, Beda Jangamas and Sudugadu Siddhas have secured some representation in government jobs. The Sindhollu community, however, has none, across Groups A, B, C and D.

Basavaraj (28), from the Sudugadu Siddha community's colony in Hosapete, Vijayanagar, is one of the very few graduates in his colony, yet he continues to struggle for a stable job. "After completing my degree, I worked in Bengaluru in the motor division, where I would earn Rs 10,000 to Rs 12,000 per month, and another Rs 1,000 to Rs 1,200 if I did overtime. I worked for a private firm, and also as a labourer. Currently, I am searching for a job," he says. He believes that dedicated reservations could improve access to jobs.

Political representation

One of the biggest hurdles for the 59 communities that have been consolidated has been their relatively small population (5.22 lakh) and lack of political representation. The only MLA from these communities is Congress leader Kothur Manjunath, who represents the Kolar Assembly seat.

"The main issue is that these communities have very small numbers, and are not concentrated in one place – they are scattered. These scattered, small groups cannot contest and win elections. Since they are economically poor and politically not powerful, they should get representation in boards, corporations. Suitable persons from these communities have to be identified and nominated," said an expert who wished to remain anonymous.

Writer and public intellectual Devanur Mahadeva explains that since accessing political representation and benefits is difficult for the alemari (nomadic) communities, reservations can play a corrective role. "If 4% of the population that is educationally, socially and economically advanced can get 10% reservation under the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) category, the alemaris (around 0.7% of Karnataka's population) should get 2% reservation. For the time being, they should get at least 1% reservation," he says.

Pradeep, a PhD student at the Hampi Kannada University, pursuing his doctorate on his Chenna Dasar community, says: "Till now, we have not had proper representation in the government or in politics. If we get at least 1% reservation, we can find leaders to represent our issues."

Dwellings

In the towns and villages of North Karnataka, communities such as the Beda/Budga Jangama, Chenna Dasar, Sindhollu and Sudugadu Siddha communities live at the intersection of faith and folklore and often live on the margins, depending on music, rituals and beggary for income.

Families live in small huts built on narrow strips of land allotted by the government decades ago under housing schemes for marginalised groups. Over the years, as generations have grown, these cramped dwellings, often no more than 10 by 12 feet, have had to accommodate eight to ten members under a single roof.

"Everyone has to live here only," says Krishna. "We make some arrangements, tie sarees and allow the newly-weds to stay there. Some sleep on the road. Whenever it rains, we keep a tub inside to collect the dripping water. The children are put to sleep in places that are warm, while the adults remain awake through the night to ensure the water doesn't overflow."

The pressures of overcrowding are compounded by the absence of basic amenities. Separate bathrooms and toilets are rare. In several colonies, bathing takes place in a common spot, often in the open. For women and young girls, the lack of privacy can be deeply uncomfortable. The huts often serve as shelters for animals too, including dogs, cats and goats, adding to the congestion.

Poor education levels

Education remains one of the biggest hurdles for many communities who are protesting today. School enrolment is low, and even among those who continue, disinterest often sets in early. The wider picture, however, reflects the depth of the crisis.

According to the Justice Das Commission, the 59 "most backward" communities account for 5.22 lakh people, or 4.97% of the Scheduled Caste population in Karnataka. Yet, only 34,653 individuals, a mere 6.64%, are PUC holders — the lowest across the five sub-groups identified by the Commission. Graduates are even fewer: just 19,085 people, or 3.66%.

Poverty, family responsibilities, and the lack of support at home pull many children away from classrooms. Jambanna, a fisherman from the Sindhollu community, explains how livelihood needs affect children's schooling. "Our children are not regularly going to school. We leave home around 3 in the morning, cast the nets and wait until daybreak. After selling the catch, we return by 8 or 10 am. By then, the children would have skipped school and gone to play."

For many parents, the desire for their children to study comes from their own experiences of hardship. "We did not go to school and faced many problems. We were also into begging. When we went to a house, they would refuse us, not even give water, pouring it from a distance," recalls Manjamma, a Chenna Dasar woman from Ginigera in Koppal taluk. "We have adjusted to this life. But our children should study well, like others, and live with dignity. For them to come up in life, the government has to help us. If not, whom do we turn to?"

Over the years, there has also been a generational shift among nomadic communities. Older people continue in their hereditary professions, often tied to performative skills, while younger members are moving away from them.

Brahmananda (78), from the Sudugadu Siddha community's colony in Hospet, Vijayanagar, recalls his career as a musician. "I would participate in dramas. When I sought the musicians' monthly pension, they asked for hand bills. Though I had these bills earlier, they were lost in a fire. Without documents, they are not giving that pension. Now, I merely get my old-age pension of Rs 1,200, which is a pittance."

Some proponents of the government's 6:6:5 formula have argued that nomadic communities do not face untouchability in the same form as Holeyas and Madigas.

However, several scholars have disputed this, noting that untouchability continues to be practised against the nomadic communities.

The Karnataka SC Development Corporation uses government grants and works alongside nationalised commercial banks to implement certain projects to benefit the nomadic SCs. These include self-employment, land ownership, micro credit schemes, Ganga Kalyana, Housing and layout formation programmes. Currently, 51 SC communities are included in this list, including Korma and Korcha communities.

Way forward

After the Cabinet's decision, leaders of nomadic communities met Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and pressed for the 1% reservation recommended by Justice Das. The Chief Minister is said to have conveyed that changes to the order are not possible at this stage, though a special package for the communities is being considered. Internal reservation activists claim Siddaramaiah admitted that the current arrangement amounts to 'social injustice', but said he was 'helpless' to alter it.

Speaking to *DH*, Kothur Manjunath says, "Many nomadic communities continue to face deep inequalities and live in makeshift structures. I have requested the CM multiple times. We are also fighting a legal battle on this. We will approach the courts."

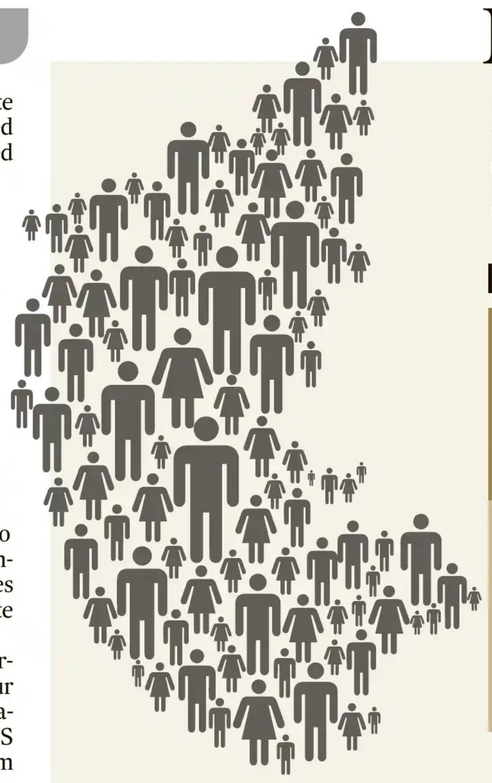
Government sources indicated that a relief package may soon be announced. "We will form a permanent SC commission on the lines of the Backward Classes Commission. They can take their appeals there. The commission will listen to their grievances and convey them to the government. We will not let them down," a top government functionary told *DH*.

Amid these developments, public intellectuals, Dalit activists and concerned citizens are worried that infighting is weakening broader Dalit unity. Some observers note that the response from SC (Right) organisations representing Holeyas and some other Dalit communities has been muted. At a time when 51,788 government jobs reserved for SCs are yet to be filled, some activists feel that all Dalit communities should come together, and unite with government workers from all communities to fight against the neo-liberal policies of successive governments. The Madiga community, which fought for decades for internal reservation, has also refrained from celebrating and has instead expressed solidarity with nomadic communities.

Devanur Mahadeva hailed their position. "The Madiga-related communities are openly supporting the Alemaris, which is appreciable. Among Group B (Holeya and affiliated castes), support has been more individual. There is a need for unity. Unfortunately, some factions within Group C opposed the 1% quota for Alemaris. That is truly disheartening."

In the state, nomadic communities are intensifying their efforts. Along with protests and legal moves, the Confederation of Untouchable Nomadic Communities has written to the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi. The organisation plans to take a delegation of 1,000 nomadic Dalits from Karnataka to Delhi on October 2 to place their demands before him.

Mapping backwardness



Karnataka has around **1.05 crore** people and **27.25 lakh** families belonging to the **SC community**

The community has **98 original castes** (moola jatis) and three caste groups, including **Adi Dravida, Adi Karnataka and Adi Andhra**

The average family size is 3.93

Around 17 communities have a population less than 100 in the state. The Holeya and Madiga castes have a population of **24 lakh individuals each.**

75.83% of SC people are concentrated in rural areas and **24.17%** are in urban areas.

In total, SC communities have a reservation share of **17%.**

SUB-CASTES CLASSIFICATION*

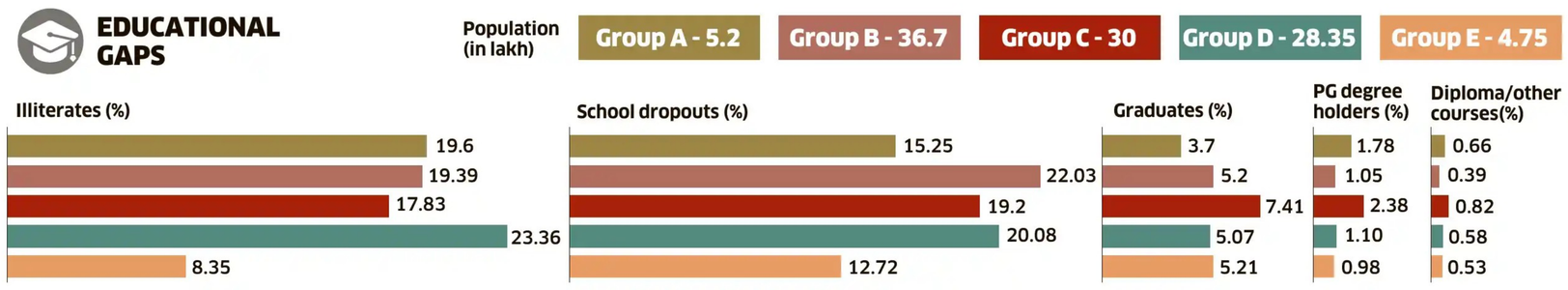
GROUP A	GROUP B	GROUP C	GROUP D	GROUP E
Most backward communities (nomadic, semi-nomadic and highly sensitive communities) 59	More backward communities (Madigas and 17 affiliated castes) 18	Backward communities (Holeyas and 16 affiliated castes) 17	Less Backward communities 4 (Banjara, Bhovi, Korama and Koracha communities)	Adi Karnataka, Adi Dravida, Adi Andhra caste groups 3

*As per Justice Nagamohan Das Committee report

LITERACY RATE UP

- The current literacy rate among **SCs is 80.84%.** As per the 2011 census, the literacy rate among **SCs was 65.33%**
- **83 communities** have over **80% literate** people which is above the state's average literacy rate but most of them do not transition to higher education
- Around **70% of graduates** are from Bhovi, Banjara, Holeya and Madiga communities only
- 25 communities do not have any technical graduates and **14 communities** do not have post-graduates. **40 communities** do not have MBBS graduates.

EDUCATIONAL GAPS

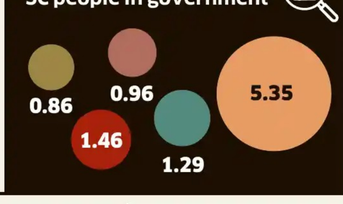


Land, a distant dream

- 96.98% of SC families own less than five acres of land while only 0.84% of families have over 15 acres.
- Banjara, Holeya, Madiga and Bhovi communities hold the lion's share of landholdings while over 40% people in Paryan, Parayya and Adiya communities are houseless.
- 6.97% of the total 27.25 lakh SC families do not have a house and 79.1% do not own a house.

GOVT JOB HOLDERS

% of representation of SC people in government

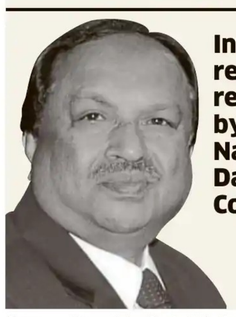


Social disparity

- More than 75% of SC individuals reported facing untouchability.
- However, 70% of communities have not lodged complaints of discrimination due to lack of awareness and the courage to question.
- In 2023-24, around 1,958 cases related to atrocity against SCs were filed while in 2024-25, 1,933 cases were filed.

Finding a voice

- In the 2024 Lok Sabha election, two each from Holeya and Madiga communities and one from Bhovi community were elected while none from the remaining 98 communities made it to the Parliament.
- Most SC leaders who won the Lok Sabha election did not mention their sub-castes and contested based on SC certificate. Hence, representation of each community is unclear.
- In all, only 60 communities are involved in electoral politics of local bodies while 40 have poor or very poor representation owing to poverty, lack of knowledge on democratic process, poor population, weak organisational framework of the community and low literacy rate.



Internal reservation recommended by Justice Nagamohan Das Commission

Caste group	No of communities	Reservation recommended (%)
A	59	1
B	18	6
C	17	5
D	4	4
E	3	1

Internal reservation as implemented by the government

Caste group	No of communities	Reservation extended (%)
A	16	6
B	19	6
C	63	5

Sources: Karnataka Social Welfare Dept, Justice Nagamohan Das Committee report

COMPILED BY **DIVYASHRI MUDAKAVI** DH GRAPHIC: **SAGAR M S**

Equitable move or political math?

SUJAY B M

Amid widespread criticism over its 6:5:5 formula for internal reservation to Scheduled Castes (SCs), the state government has stood its ground, arguing that only 23 of the 59 nomadic and semi-nomadic communities are most backward, and that communities such as Banjara and Bhovi are more backward than the Nagamohan Das Commission's estimates.

As per the government's decision, which has already been implemented and a new roster created, the 17% reservation meant for SCs is divided into three categories: Group A – Madiga and affiliated castes (6%), Group B – Holeya and affiliated castes (6%) and Group C – 59 nomadic and semi-nomadic communities, and Lambani, Bhovi, Korma and Korcha communities (5%).

A state government commissioned study, conducted by the Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), has looked into the educational, economic and employment status of the SC communities. Based on the study, the 101 SC communities have been classified into three groups unlike the five groups as recommended by the Justice Nagamohan Das report. The first group includes 35 relatively forward castes while the second group has 33 more backward castes, and the third has 33 castes that are even more backward. Only 23 communities in the third group belong to the nomadic and semi-nomadic communities.

A government source told *DH* that the study conducted by the government and ISEC analysed the same data collected by the Das Commission.

Yet, there is a difference in the classification of the castes and this is being viewed as a political move rather than scientific analysis.

K N Lingappa, a former member of the Backward Classes Commission, slammed the government's move and questioned why the commission was formed if the government had already decided. "The Das Commission, which recommended 1% reservation for the nomadic communities, largely adhered to the parameters set by the Supreme Court in the Davinder Singh vs State of Punjab case. So, why change it now? This is clearly a political decision," he argued.

Have your say

To express your opinion, e-mail us at: insight@deccanherald.co.in

Insensitive humour, from Page 1

Statutory laws cannot override constitutional guarantees

A law or enforceable guideline should not be formulated solely to protect taste or dignity or other sentiments because they are liable to curb free speech. Statutory laws cannot override constitutional guarantees.

The ruling also says that commercial speech is not protected by the right to free speech. It considers comedians' humour to be commercial speech because they earn money from their performance. The ruling practically adds commercial speech to the exceptions for the right to free speech listed under Article 19(2). However, the Constitution does not mention or recognise commercial speech, and the court cannot create a new exception.

The distinction between commercial and non-commercial speech is largely artificial. All media, including print, television and online media, are commercial in a broad sense of the term, because most

of them are supported by commercial entities. Newspapers are priced, and channels have their subscription models in place. Newspaper articles and television commentaries will also be deprived of free speech protection if the court's proposition is accepted.

The protection for free speech is not contingent on the nature, quality or intent of speech, the target of speech or the context in which it is made. Reasonable restrictions apply only to speech which involves the country's sovereignty and integrity, public order and defamation.

The Supreme Court has, in the past, held that commercial speech cannot be denied the constitutional protection of free speech. In 1995, Tata Press v. Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd, the court ruled that commercial advertisements, such as those in a Yellow Pages directory, are a form of protected speech under Article 19(1)(a). It also said that public interest is involved in commercial advertisements. The ruling was given by a three-judge bench consisting of Justices Kuldip Singh, B L Hansaria and S B Majmudar while last month's judgment was delivered by a two-judge bench.

Social media regulation

The court also wants guidelines to be framed to regulate social media's handling of humour and commercial speech. However, such laws already exist, such as those relating to libel and contempt. The Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, empower the government to act against social media companies as well.

The very fact that the Supreme Court took up this case on the basis of FIRs lodged against the comedians under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and the IT Act shows that prosecution is possible under existing laws. The court even found a judicial remedy by making the comedians tender an apology. Then why are fresh guidelines needed over the same issue?

Humour, taste, dignity, and commercial speech are all grey areas for laws and rules. To let the government legislate and frame guidelines in these areas is to give it control over these grey areas and to allow it to weaponise such laws and regulations against citizens. If the government is the referee in the hypothetical race between Article 19 and Article 21, mentioned by the court, it will be the referee who will always win. If you give the government an inch, it will take a mile, and a smile and laughter can take you to jail. No one enjoys freedom who first has to consider what she should not say. That is the dictator's mode, not the democrat's way.

The ruling and most of its observations do not advance the cause of freedom. The guidelines and regulations that the court told the government to frame will, unfortunately, have some legitimacy as the initiative came from the court. If they are based on the ideas of this ruling, they are bound to face severe challenges. The Supreme Court has, in the past, expanded fundamental rights, but this ruling seeks to shrink an important right.

Chakyar koothu is a traditional satirical performance in Kerala. Chakyars, very much stand-up comedians of their times, explained stories from the Puranas humorously and made satirical comments about the world, gods and humans. A Chakyar had absolute freedom of speech on the stage, and no one had the right to object to his comments during the performance. One Chakyar made fun of the cat eyes of the king, who was in audience. The king did not say a word. The next day, he called Chakyar to the royal court and asked him: "Now, Chakyar, who do you think you are?" Chakyar said, folding his hands: "A mouse before a cat, Your Highness." The king burst out laughing and rewarded the man. Both humour and state power had their way; freedom and power, in conflict, need not end in ill will, jail and blood.

(AVS Namboodiri is a former associate editor and editorial advisor of Deccan Herald)

In Manipur visit, PM seeks 'bridge of trust'

Talks about new dawn of hope, says govt is with people of strife-torn state

SUMIR KARMAKAR
IMPHAL, DHNS

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday stressed the need for building a strong "bridge of trust" between the hills and the Valley in Manipur and assured of a new dawn of hope for the state that has been ripped apart by two years of ethnic violence between Meiteis and Kukis.

This is Modi's first visit to the state since the conflict that began in 2023 and has led to the deaths of 260 people and displaced over 60,000.

"Manipur has thousands of years of civilisation and strong cultural roots," said Modi, addressing a public meeting inside Imphal's ancient Kangla Fort - the seat of power of erstwhile Manipur kingdom.

"So any form of violence in Manipur is unfortunate. It is not only unfortunate but also a grave injustice to our ancestors and our future generations. So we must constantly try to take Manipur to the path of peace and development unitedly."

At a similar public meeting in Kuki-dominated Churachandpur, about 65 km away, Modi said talks began recently with different groups to establish peace.

"It is part of the Centre's efforts where respect and mutual trust is given importance to establish peace in Manipur. I appeal to all groups to move in the path of peace to fulfil dreams and protect the future of children. Today, I want to assure you that I am with you, I want to promise that the Government of India is with the people of Manipur," Modi said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets violence-affected people at a relief camp, in Churachandpur, Manipur. PTI

MODI IN MANIPUR

Asks groups to move towards peace and development

- Interacts with displaced persons and assures them of help to facilitate their return
- Highlights approval of special package of Rs 3,000 crore, of which Rs 500 cr to be spent on the displaced
- Lays foundation stones for projects worth over Rs 8,500 cr for entire Manipur

> "Any form of violence in Manipur is unfortunate. It is not only unfortunate but also a grave injustice to our ancestors and our future generations. So we must constantly try to take Manipur to the path of peace and development unitedly
>
> **NARENDRA MODI,** Prime Minister

At both the venues, only Modi and Manipur Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla sat on the dais. Former CM N Biren Singh sat in the front row among the crowd in Imphal.

Balm for the displaced

Before the two public meetings, Modi interacted with groups of displaced persons and local youths and assured them of help to facilitate their return to their homes.

"The government is relentlessly trying to bring the lives of those displaced by the violence back on track soon. We have approved a special package of Rs 3,000 crore for Manipur, of which Rs 500 crore to be spent for the displaced persons," he said.

Rain trouble

Earlier, due to heavy rains, Modi could not take part in an event scheduled at Aizawl to inaugurate several projects, including the first railway line to connect Mizoram's capital with rest of India. Modi inaugurated the projects from Aizawl airport.

Later, he flew to Imphal but his chopper could not take off for Churachandpur due to bad weather.

The PM then visited Churachandpur via road. Modi also inaugurated or laid foundation stones of projects worth over Rs 8,500 crore for entire Manipur.

Locals unhappy

The PM talked about the need for unity and non-violence at a time organisations representing both Meitei and the Kuki communities have remained firm on their demands for ending the conflict.

Meiteis demand an NRC to detect "illegal Chin-Kuki migrants" from neighbouring Myanmar.

The Kukis, on the other hand, say a "separate administration" is the only way towards a solution.

Many who attended the PM's meetings, both in the hills and the Valley, expressed unhappiness, saying Modi did not offer any solution or an action plan towards lasting peace as they had expected.

People 'disappointed' with PM

Imphal and Kuki-dominated Churachandpur in Manipur were shut on Saturday. Residents braved rains and slush to hear Modi, but most went back "disappointed". They said Modi offered "nothing concrete" to end the conflict.
Details on Page 6

Modi congratulates Nepal PM

PM Narendra Modi on Saturday not only congratulated his new counterpart in Kathmandu, Sushila Karki, but also reached out to the youths of Nepal, lauding them for signalling the advent of a new dawn in their country.
Details on Page 6

US to G7: Slap tariffs on countries buying Russian oil

Trump raps NATO members for buying Moscow's fuel

NEW YORK/WASHINGTON, AGENCIES

TRUMP TALK
NATO's commitment to winning the war has been far less than 100%
Purchase of Russian oil by some members of the alliance is shocking
It greatly weakens your negotiating position, and bargaining power, over Russia
NATO members should put 50% to 100% tariffs on China

The US has asked G7 countries and NATO members to target Russia's oil trade, asserting that only "unified efforts" that cut off funding to Moscow's war machine at source can apply sufficient pressure to end "the senseless killing".

While it has asked the G7 countries to impose tariffs on countries purchasing oil from Russia, US President Donald Trump said he believes the Russia-Ukraine war would end if all NATO countries stopped buying oil from Russia and placed tariffs on China of 50% to 100% for its purchases of Russian petroleum.

The US statement to G7 did not name any country. But the US has often blamed India and China for purchasing Russian oil even when there are no tariffs on Beijing for it.

Trump posted on his social media site that NATO's commitment to winning the war "has been far less than 100%" and the purchase of Russian oil by some members of the alliance is "shocking". As if speaking to them, he said, "It greatly weakens your negotiating position, and bargaining power, over Russia."

NATO member Turkiye has been the third largest buyer of Russian oil, after China and India, according to the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air.

US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and the US Trade Representative Ambassador Jamieson Greer were on a call with G7 Finance Ministers on Friday when they reiterated Trump's call to the bloc's partners about imposing tariffs on countries purchasing oil from Russia.

François-Philippe Champagne, Canada's Minister of Finance and National Revenue, chaired a meeting of G7 Finance Ministers to discuss further measures to increase pressure on Russia to end its war against Ukraine.

Man, daughter killed as lorry hits multiple vehicles

BENGALURU, DHNS: A father-daughter duo was killed in a road accident after the autorickshaw they were travelling in was rammed by a goods-laden lorry in western Bengaluru on Saturday morning. It is suspected that the driver lost control of the lorry while covering a steep road in Kamakshipalya and rammed it into the rickshaw, a car and a bike.

The victims were said to be on their way to church. The lorry driver fled the scene and the police are on the lookout for him.

"The incident happened at around 7.45 am. Preliminary inquiries indicate that the driver lost control of the lorry as he was moving down a steep road," Anoop Shetty, DCP (Traffic), West, told *DH*.

The victims, Yesu D (44) and Maria Jenniffer (24), died on the spot.

A family travelling in the car escaped unhurt as the car turned sideways when the lorry hit it.

▸ **Accident, Page 4B**

Hassan accident toll 10; nine were under 27

MYSURU, DHNS

Had everything gone well, the Ganesha idol procession on Friday night would have safely crossed the scene of the accident, which claimed 10 lives on NH 373 in Hassan taluk, in a few minutes.

But celebrations turned tragic for nine youths aged between 17 and 27 — one of them a birthday boy — when the container truck ploughed into them at Mosale Hosahalli in Hassan taluk.

Three of the victims - Mithun, Suresh and Praveen - were students of Government Engineering College at Mosale Hosahalli, while two - Gokul and Eeshwar - were students of Government First Grade College. Some of them, hostelites, had come out for dinner. A few from other places too joined the procession and the DJ music. Mithun, the birthday boy, was dancing in the procession.

One person, Chandan (26) from Mosale Hosahalli, was declared brain dead at HIMS on Saturday.

Praveen Kumar (21) of Nagalakere, Ballari district, and Mithun (23) of Gavirangapura, Hosadurga taluk, Chitradurga district were from outside Hassan. The seven from Hassan district were; Rajesh (17), KB Palya, Holenarsipur taluk; Eeshwar (17), Danakanayakanahalli Koppalu, Hassan taluk; Gokul (17), Mutthige Hirihalli, Hassan taluk; Kumar (25), Kabbinahalli, Holenarsipur taluk; Praveen (25), Kabbinahalli, Holenarsipur taluk; Suresh (22) Maneenahalli Marle, Hassan taluk; bike rider Prabhakar (52), Bantarahalli, Hassan taluk.

The median which the truck hit and jumped before ploughing into the Ganesha idol procession. DH PHOTO

According to the FIR filed at Gorur police station against truck driver Bhuvanesh, the accident occurred on the Hassan-Holenarsipur stretch of NH 373 between 8.40 pm and 8.45 pm. The truck, moving from Hassan to Holenarsipur, hit a motorbike and swerved to the right, hitting the median before ploughing into the procession moving from Holenarsipur towards Hassan. Nine of the deceased were in the procession. Bike rider Prabhakar also died.

▸ **Hassan accident, Page 4B**

युवा कार्यक्रम एवं खेल मंत्रालय
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YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

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CBC 47107/13/0011/2526

CIVIC DECAY Dissolved BBMP leaves behind a mountain of problems

Old woes, new commissioners: Is a better B'luru within reach?

NAVEEN MENEZES
BENGALURU, DHNS

When the sun sets, commuting on the service road between Babusapalya and Kasturi Nagar becomes a struggle. The stretch, which remains busy round the clock as it connects key parts of Bengaluru from Kempegowda International Airport, is riddled with potholes, and most of the streetlights have not been working — not just for days, but for several months.

The grievance is no secret. Officials are aware, yet no solution has been provided.

Civic complaints like these are piling up across Bengaluru, causing inconvenience to citizens on a daily basis. The Sahaaya 2.0 app alone receives about 300 grievances a day. Many more flood social media. Countless others go unreported, as citizens assume the authorities will act on their own — though that rarely happens. This is despite adequate funds being allocated for the maintenance of infrastructure and services.

In its 2025-26 budget, the now-dissolved Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) had earmarked Rs 39.50 crore for maintaining flyovers, underpasses and subways — three times more than in previous years. Grants allocated for the maintenance of rajakaluve (stormwater drains) were doubled to Rs 64.52 crore, while arterial roads got Rs 50 crore for their upkeep, and streetlights Rs 78 crore.

While money exists on paper, very little change is seen on the ground. With oversight and punitive action missing, it is learnt that some engineers have become more confident in inflating numbers in the measurement books than they were five or ten years ago. Since details on how funds at the local or neighbourhood level are used are rarely made public, it is a struggle even for active citizens to get things moving.

Garbage is another sore point. Bengaluru was ranked among the worst metropolitan cities in solid waste management in the recently released Swachh Survekshan survey. This is despite the BBMP providing Rs 850 crore for collection and transportation of garbage. On top of this, the government also formed an exclusive entity for handling garbage responsibilities by taking it out of the BBMP's ambit.

With the now-dissolved BBMP failing to improve efficiency and address grievances of citizens, many hope the five newly created municipal corporations will offer better solutions.

K S Kangheyan, a social worker from Mahadevapura, is hopeful. "Unlike earlier, grievances can now be escalated within each corporation. This could make public access easier. So far, the special commissioners of the BBMP rarely responded to calls or messages," he said. He also welcomed the move to bring lakes and stormwater drains under one umbrella, unlike the earlier centralised system.

Substandard asphalt is being used to fill potholes and repair city roads, with motorists saying the work doesn't last even a single rain. DH FILE PHOTO

Citizen groups echo the optimism. R Rajagopalan, convener of the Bengaluru Coalition — a citizens' collective — said decisions could now be quicker, with files no longer required to travel to Hudson Circle. "In the previous system, zonal commissioners had very limited powers compared to commissioners today. The transition, however, will be painful, especially for people waiting on khata-related services and plan approvals," he added.

Some commissioners are already making changes. P Rajendra Cholan, commissioner of the Bengaluru City Central Corporation, has introduced a Rs 25 lakh revolving fund for quick road repairs. "This way, engineers can act without getting stuck in procedures. What matters is that funds are used responsibly, with clear accountability," he said.

Other corporation commissioners — now at the helm of affairs — have been hitting the ground almost daily, trying to get a grip on issues plaguing their jurisdictions. A day after a school bus nearly toppled on the Panathur–Balagere road, Bengaluru East Corporation Commissioner D S Ramesh inspected the stretch with engineers — a rare gesture earlier. Similar issues that were very local in nature but critical for improving the lives of citizens were not taken seriously by authorities in the past.

But questions remain over budgets. While authorities may have the intent to fix long-pending civic issues, the bigger concern is whether they will have the money to do so. With limited resources, the corporations might barely survive. It is not clear how much of the corporations' budgets will be earmarked for maintenance, beyond administrative costs such as salaries and pensions. Much of the state and central grants are expected to be routed to the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), leaving the five corporations — carrying a mountain of problems — with little room to bring about meaningful change.

Anticipating these concerns, Clement Jayakumar, a member of the Mahadevapura Taskforce, said it was too early to judge the new governance structure. "We may see real differences only after April 2026, when individual corporations present their own budgets. For now, the GBA has allocated funds based on the old BBMP budget. There are plenty of inspections, but little actual work on the ground because of the funding crunch," he said.

Close to 3,300 transformers converted to new structures

Many were earlier placed on footpaths, obstructing pedestrian movement

BENGALURU, DHNS

Bescom has converted close to 3,300 transformers in the city into newly designed prefabricated single steel pole structures to avoid inconvenience to pedestrians and improve efficiency.

Most of these transformers were earlier placed on footpaths, obstructing pedestrian movement and endangering lives. A few others were converted as they were dangerously close to parks, houses, and other public places. Over 100 transformers have also been shifted to CA sites and other locations.

However, the rate of conversion has been low, with only around 200 transformers converted over the last two years.

Senior Bescom officials maintained that the work is ongoing and that whenever local authorities flag an unsafe transformer, conversion is taken up.

"There is no fixed number of transformers that are supposed to be converted. As and when local officials, citizens, or local leaders identify and report an unsafe transformer to us, we plan conversion activities," an official said.

Sources, however, said the conversion is progressing slowly due to financial constraints.

"Many infrastructure projects receive subsidies from the state or central government. However, transformer conversion does not fall under any such category. Hence Bescom has to fund the entire project, and the expenditure must be approved by the Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (KERC)," a senior official revealed.

SAFETY IN FOCUS

- A 37-year-old man died after accidentally touching the fence of a transformer on Church Street.
- Following this, a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) was filed in the high court.
- The court directed Bescom to redesign transformers to ensure pedestrian safety.
- In 2021, the court reiterated its stand, instructing Bescom to prepare an action plan to replace or relocate unsafe transformers.

In 2013, a 37-year-old man lost his life when he accidentally touched the fence of a transformer on Church Street. Following the incident, a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) was filed with the High Court.

"After the high court directed us to ensure pedestrian safety and make way for easy movement, Bescom constituted an expert committee and came up with a new design. Accordingly, single-pole steel structures housing the transformer at a height of over seven feet were designed," explained a senior Bescom official.

In 2021, a similar case was heard by the Karnataka High Court, which instructed Bescom to chalk out an action plan to replace or relocate the transformers at the earliest.

BMTC driver assaulted by tea shop worker at Majestic

BENGALURU, DHNS: A BMTC driver has alleged that he was assaulted by a tea shop worker at the Majestic bus stop.

The driver, who filed a complaint with Upparpet police station, stated that he had parked the bus at platform 27 in the Majestic bus depot and had gone to have tea with one of his friends.

At one of the tea shops, he told his friend that the tea there was not very good and suggested they drink at another shop. "After this, a worker from the shop barged out and abused me verbally. He then hit me with a wooden plank and threatened to kill me. I sustained injuries on my head and underwent treatment before coming to file a complaint," he said.

The incident is said to have taken place between 8.30 am and 9 am on Saturday. Police have registered a complaint under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita Section 118 (1), Section 351, and Section 352.

After school bus mishap, commissioner seeks quick Balagere Road fix

BENGALURU, DHNS

A day after a school bus carrying around 20 children got stuck in a drain on Balagere Road, Bengaluru East Corporation Commissioner D S Ramesh inspected the stretch and directed officials to expedite expansion works on the Panathur–Balagere road.

According to officials, there is a proposal to widen the existing road at Balagere to 18 metres. However, the project has been delayed due to ongoing land acquisition.

The commissioner said that land required for widening will be acquired through the Transferable Development Rights (TDR) scheme and instructed officials and contractors to complete the work on priority.

Referring to the spot where the bus incident occurred, Ramesh said the adjacent compound wall occupying the space needed for widening has already been removed and the work has commenced.

During the inspection, Ramesh also observed that the major stormwater drain running alongside Balagere Road had been encroached upon.

"Due to the ongoing monsoon, these encroachments are causing water stagnation on the roads. The commissioner directed officials to remove the encroachments and expedite work to ensure smooth flow of water into Varthur Lake," the civic body said in a release.

Bengaluru West Corporation Commissioner Rajendra K V also inspected Indira Canteens in his jurisdiction and directed officials to ensure cleanliness around them.

Bengaluru North Corporation Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar inspected a few areas in his jurisdiction and instructed officials to improve waste management and take up desilting of stormwater drains.

Rajendra Cholan, Bengaluru Central Corporation Commissioner, urged citizens to work with officials to transform pedestrian walkways in and around Majestic into model walkways.

Inclusive auto-driving initiative launched to boost safe mobility

BENGALURU, DHNS: BDA Chairman N A Harris said he will hold discussions with the BBMP regarding the provision of free autos by the government to those who successfully complete auto-driving training.

He was speaking at the inauguration of the free auto-driving training programme for transgender persons and women in Shantinagar Constituency, organised by B PAC in collaboration with CGI at the MG Road Metro Station Kala Kendra. "It is important that women and transgender persons, once trained and qualified, are provided free autos by the government. This will enable them to start their professional journey and achieve self-reliance. I will take this matter up with the concerned authorities and the BBMP," said N A Harris.

Geetanjali Vikram Kirloskar, MD, Kirloskar Systems Pvt Ltd, said, "It is commendable that women and transgender persons are coming forward to take up auto-driving. Their presence in public transport will encourage more women to travel confidently at night. Bengaluru should set a national example in inclusive mobility."

Revathy Ashok, Managing Trustee and CEO of B PAC, announced the next phase of the initiative: "In the second phase, more than 100 women and transgender persons will be trained in auto-driving. Along with driving, participants will receive training in leadership, English communication, customer management, digital literacy, and financial skills."

MLA N A Harris inaugurates the free auto-rickshaw skill training programme for women and sexual minorities in Bengaluru on Saturday. DH PHOTO/KISHOR KUMAR BOLAR

Memory Dialogue at IISc calls for dementia-friendly communities

BENGALURU, DHNS: Dementia India Alliance (DIA), in collaboration with the Centre for Brain Research (CBR), Nightingales Medical Trust, and VayahVikas, recently hosted The Memory Dialogue: Science, Care & Community at the Centre for Brain Research, IISc Bengaluru.

The day-long event brought together more than 190 participants — including researchers, caregivers, healthcare professionals, students, and community members — to spotlight the urgent challenge of dementia in India and to share practical approaches to prevention, care, and community action.

It is estimated that 88 lakh people in India are currently living with dementia, a number projected to double by 2050. Awareness of the disease remains low, diagnosis is often delayed, and families frequently struggle to access the required support. The Memory Dialogue aimed to close the gap between science and society by providing the latest knowledge on prevention and care, while fostering dementia-friendly communities.

The programme opened with sessions on science and prevention, where Dr Jonas Sundarakumar and Dr Thomas Issac from CBR highlighted the importance of risk-factor management in early and midlife. They emphasised lifestyle choices such as regular physical activity, a balanced diet, and mental stimulation as powerful protective measures against dementia.

The care and support segment of the event featured experts and caregivers discussing early diagnosis, treatment, and community initiatives that enhance quality of life for people living with dementia. Participants also experienced the Brain Health Fair, receiving free memory screenings, lifestyle guidance, and specialised support resources for caregivers.

Seshadripuram Institutions celebrate Vivekananda's historic Chicago speech

BENGALURU, DHNS: Seshadripuram Group of Institutions organised Fragrance of Harmony, a day-long event to mark the 132nd anniversary of Swami Vivekananda's epoch-making address at the World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago.

The programme was jointly organised by the institution in collaboration with Karnataka Gandhi Smarak Nidhi, Gandhi Peace Foundation, and Vivekapatha, Gadag. It was inaugurated by former Supreme Court judge Shivaraj V Patil and opened with an all-faith inclusive prayer in which over 200 students, faculty members, and dignitaries participated.

Over 200 students, faculty members and dignitaries took part in the event. PHOTO: SESHADRIPURAM GROUP OF INSTITUTIONS

10 cops suspended for partying with peddlers

BENGALURU, DHNS: Ten city police personnel, including an inspector, have been suspended for partying with drug peddlers and failing to crack down on the narcotics trade.

Chamarajpet police inspector Manjanna was suspended by city police commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh, while the rest were suspended by Girish S, Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), West Division.

The other suspended personnel are head constables Ramesh and Shivaraj, and constables Madhusudan, Prasanna, Shankar, and Anand from Chamarajpet police station, along with J J Nagar police station personnel ASI Kumar, head constable Anand, and staffer Basavanagouda.

"We received a complaint that these personnel had partied with drug peddlers. An initial investigation showed a prima facie case against them. We are also investigating whether the cops had any financial dealings with the drug peddlers," police sources said.

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

Stage set: Jairangam theatre festival, The Koramangala Club, CA-17, 6th Cross Rd, 6th Block, Koramangala, 6 pm.

Vocal recital: The Bangalore Gayana Samaja presenting vocal recital by Dr R S Nandakumar, Bangalore Gayana Samaja, Krishna Rajendra Road, 5.30 pm.

Live concert: Renuka Panwar Live-in Concert,Phoenix Marketcity Mall courtyard, 6 pm onwards.

Invites to be published in this column should be sent to: **incitytoday@deccanherald.co.in.** Please note that hard copies will not be accepted

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST

Generally cloudy sky with Light rain

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	28.6°C
Minimum	21.5°C
Rainfall (as of 8:30 am)	--
Humidity (as of 5:30 pm)	63%
Sunset (Sept 14)	6:23 pm
Sunrise (Sept 15)	6:09 am
Moonrise	10:59 pm
Moonset	11:22 pm

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

CAMPUS INTEREST

Prominent city institutions keen to join KWIN City project

ASRA MAVAD
BENGALURU, DHNS

A few prominent educational institutions in the city have evinced interest in being part of the Karnataka government's ambitious KWIN City project.

A list featuring land allegedly allotted to educational institutions as part of the project was making the rounds on social media. However, speaking to *DH*, Industries Minister M B Patil clarified that the list was untrue, as the names of institutions would only be finalised once the land acquisition process was completed.

The list in question mentioned 13 educational institutions — including St John's University, Dayanand Sagar University (DSU), Dr CKM College of Ethics and Technology Law, KK Educational and Charitable Trust, KLE University, PES University, Pragati University, NVT Quality Educational Trust, RV College, ISBR, Mehras, Shradha University, and SKRIBE. It also stated the proposed student count and land allotted to each institution, for example, 50 acres each for St John's University and Dayanand Sagar University, and 25 acres for RV College.

DH confirmed that two of the 13 institutions had reached out to the Industries Ministry but were yet to receive a positive response.

"The KWIN City project is a good initiative of the state government. DSU would be happy to be a part of this project if the land for our campus is allotted on the main road," R Janardhan, Pro-Vice Chancellor, DSU, told *DH*.

The minister said his team was in touch with various national and international institutions for the KWIN City project. "We want to bring the best institutions and universities to the city. Right now, the team is only having informal conversations," he added.

1,500 acres acquired

A senior official with the ministry confirmed that so far, only about 1,500 acres had been acquired for the project. "The land is being acquired in phases. In the first phase, we want to acquire about 2,000 acres," Patil elaborated.

The project is set to be spread over 5,800 acres and will be located between Dobbaspet and Doddaballapura, just a 45-minute drive from Bengaluru airport and 50 km from the city centre.

Now, govt to provide free peritoneal dialysis services at home

350 patients across state to benefit from the initiative

ASRA MAVAD
BENGALURU, DHNS

For the first time, the Karnataka government will be providing free peritoneal dialysis (PD) services to selected patients in the comfort of their own home under the Pradhan Mantri National Dialysis Programme (PMNDP).

To kick off the initiative, 350 patients — around 10 from each district — will be identified by nephrologists at the district level, according to a government order issued on September 11.

"Under the PMNDP, hemodialysis services have been successfully launched across all districts of Karnataka. The inclusion of PD services in district hospitals, which currently have nephrologists, will provide more options to patients and provide easy access to healthcare," states the order.

While hemodialysis filters the patient's blood using an external machine and often requires hospital visits, PD uses the patient's own abdominal lining and a special fluid to filter waste at home.

The order further states that PD bags and necessary consumables will be procured through Karnataka State Medical Supplies Corporation Limited (KSMSCL) at an estimated cost of Rs 26,400 per patient per month for six months, amounting to Rs 5.54 crore.

Catheter insertion, hospital charges, training and first PD session costs will be borne by Suvarna Arogya Suraksha Trust (SAST) under the Ayushman Bharat – Arogya Karnataka (ABArK) scheme.

Peritoneal dialysis uses the patient's own abdominal lining and a special fluid to filter waste at home.

HARSH GUPTA
Principal Secretary, Department of Health & Family Welfare

"We believe this initiative can help people become more consistent with dialysis care. Based on the response, we plan to expand the number of beneficiaries in the future.

Launch in a month

Harsh Gupta, Principal Secretary to the Department of Health & Family Welfare, told *DH* that the initiative is set to be launched in a month.

"A patient usually undergoes 12 cycles of dialysis per month. So we will end up spending around Rs 20,000 in the hospital per month for a patient. Financially speaking, the cost incurred by the government for both PD and hemodialysis is about the same. However, with this initiative, the patient will end up saving on the travel cost to the hospital," the official elaborated.

The health department will soon start training district-level officials to carry out the at-home procedure.

"We believe this initiative can help people become more consistent with dialysis care. Based on the response, we plan to expand the number of beneficiaries in the future," Gupta added.

Week-long Dasara film festival begins in Mysuru

MYSURU, DHNS: The week-long Dasara Film Festival began in the city on Saturday. District in-charge minister H C Mahadevappa launched the fest. With this and Yuva Sambhrama, the air of Dasara has enveloped city much before the festival.

Minister Mahadevappa lauded the role of cinemas in serving the society by creating a positive impact in building a healthy society.

As many as 84 movies including the ones which have won national and international awards, movies directed by women, children's movies and more will be screened in three screens of INOX at Mall of Mysore from September 14 to 20. An expo of rare photographs by Pragathi Ashwath Narayan depicting evolution of sandalwood is also organised as part of the fest.

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- **Educational Qualifications**: Graduate from recognized university.
- **Physical Standards**: A candidate must be physically and medically fit in all respects.
- **Employment**: Gainfully Employed.
- **DATE OF INTERVIEW:NOVEMBER 2025** (Firm dates will be communicated later)
- **SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION: 01 SEPTEMBER 2025 TO 14 OCTOBER 25 (Refer application link uploaded on Indian Army website on 29 August 25)**
  Note: - Submission of applications will be accepted by post only.
- **Address**:
  Directorate General Territorial Army,
  Integrated Headquarters of Ministry of Defence,
  'A' Block, 4th Floor, Ministry of Defence Office Complex, KG Marg,New Delhi- 110001.
- Application form and other details are given in the advertisement available on the Indian Army official website **www.indianarmy.nic.in.** The detailed advertisement will also be published in the Employment News of this month.
- INCOMPLETE/ INELIGIBLE APPLICATION FORM AND THOSE APPLICATION FORM RECEIVED AFTER **14 OCTOBER 2025** WILL BE REJECTED WITHOUT INTIMATION.
- APPLICATION FORM OF CIVILIAN CANDIDATES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AND WILL BE REJECTED WITHOUT INTIMATION.

CBC 10120/11/0004/2526

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PUBLIC NOTICE

DESTRUCTION OF MEDICAL RECORDS

It is here by informed to all the concerned that the Medical Records Department (MRD)Has **decided to destroy all normal discharge In-patient Medical Records for the period of January – 2017 To December – 2019.** The destruction will be undertaken by ensuring strict adherence to all statutory guidelines applicable. Patients who want to obtain a copy of their **original Medical Records can submit a return request along with Govt ID proof and hospital ID to MRD on or before 14th of October 2025.** No requests will be considered after this date. **The medical records destruction will begin from 15th of October – 2025.** If you have any questions regarding the destruction of medical records, please contact – **08043420144**.
Email: mrd.cmi@asterhospital.com
Note: Medical Records are considered as private information Hence please contact by yourself.

New helpline to help rescue stranded marine animals

Team provides real-time guidance via calls and consultations

PAVAN KUMAR H
HUBBALLI, DHNS

Reefwatch, a not-for-profit organisation, has launched first-of-its-kind marine helpline to rescue stranded marine animals and mitigate environmental problems on India's coastline.

Forest departments of Karnataka and Goa in the last six years have reported sightings of over 1,800 stranded marine animals including Sea Turtles, Pelagic Birds and Cetaceans (whales, dolphins, and porpoises).

Reefwatch has been working on the marine ecology in Karnataka and Goa.

The not-for-profit organisation now intends to provide real-time guidance via calls and consultations, ensuring no stranded sea turtle, sea bird or cetacean goes unattended with its helpline +91 6360 249764 (Matsya: Marine Telemedicine Helpline & Resource Centre).

The dedicated telephone number intends to support citizens, forest department staff or anyone who encounters strandings on India's coastline.

A team of marine biologists and veterinarians will provides real-time guidance via calls and consultations.

"Over the past few years of working in Goa and Karnataka, our team has attended to hundreds of cases of injured marine megafauna. While we have not got the financial resources to have physical treatment centres in each coastal state, we hope to use our experience to assist injured endangered marine animals through vets and professionals operating in those areas. Through Matsya, we not only hope to provide remote assistance to people who encounter injured/dead sea turtles, sea birds, dolphins and whales but also to gather this nation-wide information into a single database that can be used to better conserve these endangered species," said Nayantara Jain, Executive Director of ReefWatch Marine Conservation.

The team has also prepared training material, including instructional videos, manuals and handbooks, which have been developed and translated into India's coastal languages for this purpose, she says.

For the forest department the helpline would act as an additional conservation measure as scientists and veterinarians of Reefwatch, who have been assisting the ground staff of the department with identifying the species, gravity of injuries and first aid required, will now be able to assist fishermen, volunteers and others via call.

The team has also prepared training material, including instructional videos, manuals and handbooks

"Of late, the department is giving greater importance towards conservation of marine animals. Reefwatch has been assisting our staff in rescue, rehabilitation and finding the cause of death of marine animals. The helpline would add impetus for our conservation work," said a senior forest officer who, till recently, worked in Canara Circle. He said the NGO should continue to work in collaboration with the forest department.

The organisation is supported by Rohini Nilekani Philanthropies Foundation.

3-day conference on infertility held

BENGALURU, DHNS: Gunasheela Surgical and Maternity Hospital celebrated its 50th anniversary by hosting a three-day conference on infertility, "Pushing Frontiers in Infertility," in Bengaluru.

The event marked five decades of reproductive care and featured global infertility experts sharing breakthroughs in recurrent pregnancy loss and advanced Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART).

The conference included various sessions such as panel discussions, workshops, and debates, covering topics like fresh vs frozen transfers, intrauterine immunotherapy, chronic endometritis, ovulation induction, progesterone, sperm quality optimisation, ovarian tissue preservation and mosaic embryo outcomes.

The event brought together renowned national and international faculty members, including Dr Devika Gunasheela, Dr Madhuri Milind Patil, Dr Ashwini N, Dr Ashwini M, Dr Akhila M V, Dr Antonio Capalbo, Dr Clare Boothroyd, Dr Claus Andersen, Dr Ranjith Ramasamy, and Dr Ben Mol, among others.

Gunasheela Hospital is known for its pioneering work in ART, having achieved South India's first ART pregnancy in 1988 under Dr Sulochana Gunasheela's leadership. The hospital has been at the forefront of laparoscopic, hysteroscopic, and IVF milestones in Karnataka.

Electric loco to haul M'luru-Subrahmanya passenger train

MANGALURU, DHNS: With the completion of electrification of Mangaluru Junction-Subrahmanya Road, the Mangaluru Central-Subrahmanya Road-Mangaluru Central Passenger train, which had been running with diesel locomotive, will now run with electric loco from September 15.

The passenger train makes three-round trips daily with Train Nos 56625/26, 56627/28 and 56629/30 between Mangaluru Central and Subrahmanya Road.

BEFORE THE ARBITRATION AND CONCILIATION CENTRE-BENGALURU
(DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL)
"Khanija Bhavan" III Floor, East Wing,
Racecourse Road, Bengaluru-560001
BEFORE THE HON'BLE JUSTICE A.S.BOPANNA, FORMER JUDGE, SUPREME COURT OF INDIA
SOLE ARBITRATOR
Arbitration Case No. 103/2025
BETWEEN: M/s. OMR Realty Private Limited ...Claimant
AND: H.K. Developers & others ..Respondents
NOTICE/SUMMONS TO THE RESPONDENT No. 4
To: 4. MR. CHIKKE GOWDA
S/o. Late Chennegowda, R/a. NGEF Layout, Kasturi Nagar, Bengaluru-560043
Whereas the above named claimant has instituted an Arbitration proceedings as against you and other respondents seeking for a Direction to jointly and severally pay a sum of **Rs.59,77,25,910/-** being the amount admittedly due to the Claimant as on 30.09.2023 along with interest at the rate of 29% P.A. from 01.10.2023 till the date of realization; to Direct the Respondents to pay a sum of Rupees Five Crores to the claimant towards compensation for breach of the Loan Agreement dated 10.07.2017; and certain other reliefs'.
You are hereby notified to appear before the Hon'ble Sole Arbitrator at the Arbitration and Conciliation Center at Bengaluru **on 04.11.2025 at 10:30 a.m.** in person or through Advocate / Pleader to answer the claim, falling which the claim petition will be heard and disposed of placing you ex-parte.
Given under my hand & seal of the Tribunal this **12th day of September 2025.**
By order of the Court, Section Officer
Arbitration & Conciliation Centre Bengaluru
(High Court of Karnataka) Bengaluru-560 001
Advocate for Claimants:
MANMOHAN P.N. ASSOCIATES,
Advocates, No. 105, "A" Wing, First Floor, Blue Cross Chambers, Infantry Cross Road, Bengaluru-560001, Ph:9886691331/9902578830

भारतीय विज्ञान शिक्षा एवं अनुसंधान संस्थान भोपाल
(शिक्षा मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार द्वारा स्थापित)
Indian Institute of Science Education and Research Bhopal
(Estb. by Ministry of Education, Govt. of India)

Advt. No.: IISERB/DOAA/2025/02 September 14, 2025

Admission for Academic Year 2025-26

Applications are invited for the semester commencing from January 2026.

Ph.D. Programme (For National and International Students)

Natural Sciences Stream : Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Earth and Environmental Sciences, Physics.
Engineering Sciences Stream : Chemical Engineering, Data Science and Engineering (DSE), Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS).
Humanities and Social Sciences Stream : Economic Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences.

Details of qualification, eligibility, application form and application procedure are available on **https://www.iiserb.ac.in/admission**

Last Date for Submission of Application: **October 13, 2025**
(Updates, if any, shall be notified on the Institute website)

शैक्षणिक अधिष्ठाता

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
All INDIA PENSION ADALAT-2025

South Western Railway will be holding **All India Pension Adalat-2025** simultaneously at the offices of Headquarters, Divisions, Workshops & Bengaluru Construction on **Monday, 15th December 2025,** pertaining to grievances of Retired Employees/ Dependants of deceased employees in respect of Pension, Settlement dues & Medical Allowance.
Last date for receipt of Applications for the Adalat will be **06.11.2025.** It may be noted that the grievances received after the closure date i.e; **06.11.2025,** may not be possible to be dealt in the All India Pension Adalat-2025.

For details log on: www.swr.indianrailways.gov.in

Principal Chief Personnel Officer
Hubballi
PUB/466/AAS/PRB/SWR/2025-26

Download the UTS Mobile App from Google Play Store for ease of booking of unreserved tickets

South Western Railway-SWR SWRRLY @SWRAILWAYHQ @sw_railways

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY
OPEN TENDER
DATE: 10-9-2025

E-tender on behalf of the president of India acting through Chief Project Manager, Gati Shakit Unit, West Central Railway, Jabalpur for the following works:- **Tender No.:** CPM/GSU-JBP/EPC-01-2025, Dated: 10.09.2025, **Name of work with location:** Major Upgradation of Jabalpur Railway Station of West Central Railway on Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC). **Approx cost of the work (Rs):** 231,63,00,000/-, **Earnest Money (Rs.):** 1,15.81,500/-, **Completion period :** 30 Month, **Last date & Time for submission of tender (Up to 15.00 Hrs. On):** 27.10.2025, **Tender to be opened at 15:15 Hrs on :** 27.10.2025. The complete information of the above e-tender' is available on website "https://ireps.gov.in" and also placed on notice board of the Chief Project Manager, Gati Shakit Unit, West Central Railway, Jabalpur Tenders other than in the form of e-bids shall not be accepted against above tenders.

SD/
Asst. Divisional Engineer (GSU)
West Central Railway, Jabalpur

स्वच्छ भारत अभियान एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

Government of Jharkhand
Directorate of Food & Consumer Affairs
3rd Floor, JSFC Bhawan, Kadru, Ranchi -834002

Reverse e-Auction Procurement Notice through GeM Portal

Letter No.-kha.up.ni.01-namak-11/2025- **1506** **Date : 12-09-2025**

Selection Of Bidder For Supply Of Free Flow Refined Iodized Edible Salt (As Per FSSAI Norms) For 2nd Quarter (July 2025 to September 2025) Of Financial Year 2025-26 By e-Tender Through E-Bid Followed By Reverse Auction on GeM Platform.

Bid Details	
GeM Bid No.	GEM/2025/B/6677183 Dated: 12-09-2025
Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)/Bid Security	Rs. 42,90,000.00 as EMD (margin money) in the form of Demand Draft issued from any scheduled commercial bank in the name of "Director, Directorate of Food and Consumer Affairs, Jharkhand Ranchi" in the office of Directorate of Food and Consumer Affairs, Jharkhand, Ranchi, 3rd JSFC Bhawan, Kadru, Ranchi – 834002 before last date of submission of bid documents.
Document Sale Date & Timing i.e Last Date & time for downloading RFP from website **http://jharkhand.gov.in/food** & GeM portal	From 12-09-2025 to 03-10-2025
Online Bid Submission Period	From 12-09-2025 to 03-10-2025 (1600 hrs.)
Pre-Bid Meeting	19-09-2025 at 12:00 pm through google meet (https://meet.google.com/jxf-paxh-ovq)
Date of Auction	Will be published after technical evaluation
Name and concerned person for Correspondence	Mr. Dilip Tirkey Mobile no.- 9470520458 , email- directorfood18@gmail.com

Sd/-
Director
(Directorate of Food & Consumer Affairs)

PR 361819 (Directorate of Food and Consumer Affairs) 25-26 (D)

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Tender Notice No. SWR-SBC-NewCrossing-TUHD, Dated : 09-09-2025
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders for the following works.

Name of the Work	Approx. Value
SWR - Bengaluru Division - Thurandahalli - New Crossing Station in Yelhanka - Kolar Station	Rs. 3,70,27,433.08

Last date for submission of bids:
Upto 15:00 Hrs on 30-09-2025
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Senior Divisional Signal and Telecommunication Engineer/Bengaluru
PUB/468/AAS/PRB/SWR/2025-26
Download the UTS Mobile App from Google Play Store for ease of booking of unreserved tickets
South Western Railway-SWR SWRRLY @SWRAILWAYHQ @sw_railways

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Publication of E-TENDER NOTICE No. GEM/2025/B/6652793 Dt: 06.09.2025
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tender for the following work.

Item of work	Approx.Value
Hiring of MUV pick up vants for Traction Distribution depots of Bengaluru division for moving men and materials for 2 years	Rs. 2,09,47,026/-

Last date for Submission of bids :
Upto 16.00 hrs on 29.09.2025
For details log on : www.gem.gov.in
Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer/TRD, Bengaluru
PUB/452/AAD360/PRB/SWR/2025-26
Download the **UTS** Moblie App from **Google Play Store** for ease of booking of unreserved tickets
South Western Railway - SWR SWRRLY @SWRAILWAYHQ @sw_railways

Video of delivery under mobile flashlight goes viral

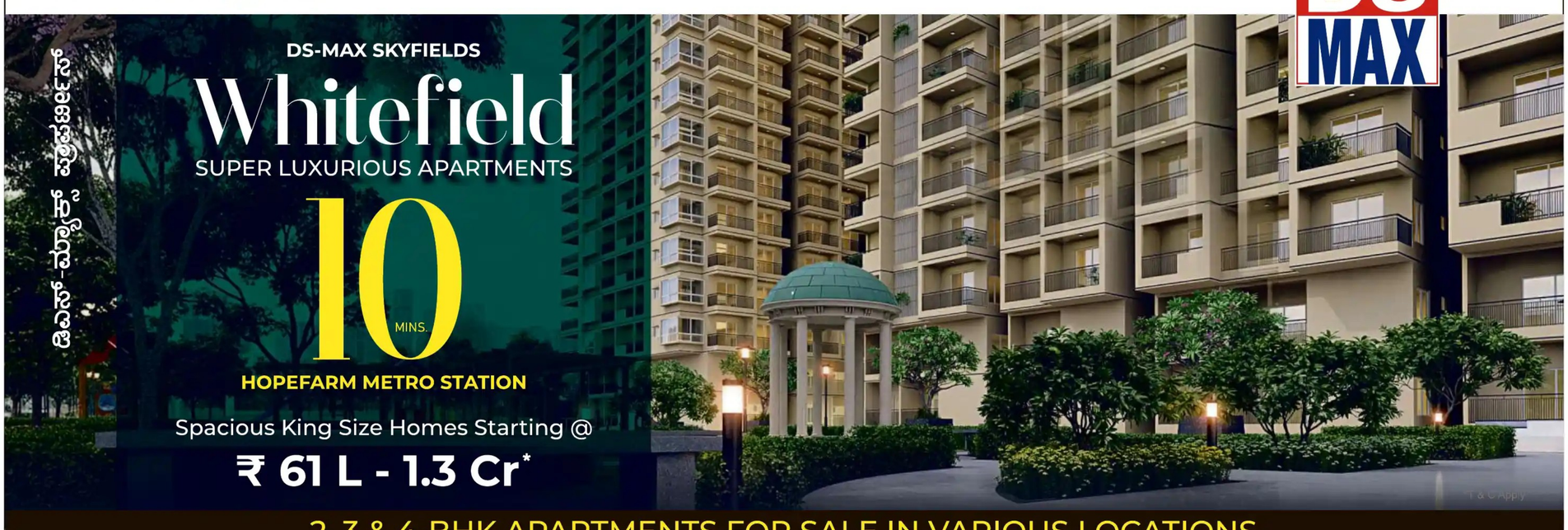
HATTI GOLD MINES (RAICHUR DISTRICT), DHNS: A purported video of a medical professional conducting child delivery under a mobile flashlight at a primary health centre in Hutti town went viral on social media, sparking public outrage.

It is alleged that the solar power facility at the PHC is not functioning and the generator at the health centre has been dysfunctional for years.

Taluk Health Officer Amaresh Makapura said the hospital has solar-powered UPS and attributed the incident to a technical snag. He said steps would be taken to ensure that such incidents do not repeat in future.

District Health Officer of Raichur, Dr Surendra Babu said an old video had been uploaded in the social media which would bring down doctors' morale. "We will conduct an inquiry as to who made the video. Action will be initiated if the department staff are found errant," he said.

PRM/KA/RERA/1250/304/PR/251024/007179
2 & 3-BHK | G+14 FLOORS
JOY OF LIVING
DS MAX



2, 3 & 4-BHK APARTMENTS FOR SALE IN VARIOUS LOCATIONS

PRM/KA/RERA/1251/309/PR/060923/006244 **TUMKUR ROAD** G+9 — 10 MINS. MADAVARA METRO — ₹ 61.36 - 91.68 Lakhs*	PRM/KA/RERA/1250/301/PR/251024/007178 **YELAHANKA** G+14 — 5 MINS. RAJANUKUNTE — ₹ 49.36 - 88.53 Lakhs*	PRM/KA/RERA/1251/310/PR/210324/006724 **SILKBOARD** G+14 — NEAR SINGASANDRA METRO — ₹ 83.97 L - 1.31 Cr*	PRM/KA/RERA/1251/310/PR/151223/006489 **BANASHANKARI** G+3 — OPP. NPS SCHOOL (3 & 4-BHK) — ₹ 1.19 - 2.17 Cr*	PRM/KA/RERA/1251/308/PR/280222/004739 **CHANDAPURA** G+3 — 10 MINS. BOMMASANDRA METRO — ₹ 42.30 - 55.80 Lakhs*
PRM/KA/RERA/1251/308/PR/160824/006972 **ELECTRONIC CITY** G+4 — 10 MINS. HOSA ROAD METRO — ₹ 62.26 L - 1.24 Cr*	PRM/KA/RERA/1251/308/PR/290122/004660 **SARJAPURA** G+4 — SARJAPUR - ATTIBELE RD — ₹ 43.68 - 83.25 Lakhs*	PRM/KA/RERA/1251/472/PR/250225/007524 **AIRPORT ROAD** G+14 — NEAR TECH CLOUD IT PARK — ₹ 69.87 L - 1.18 Cr*	PRM/KA/RERA/1251/310/PR/150223/005721 **MYSORE ROAD** G+14 — NEAR CHALLAGHATTA METRO STN. — ₹ 59.56 - 87.47 Lakhs*	PRM/KA/RERA/1251/308/PR/160824/006973 **BANNERGHATTA RD** G+14 — NEAR KOPPA GATE — ₹ 56.64 - 82.18 Lakhs*

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CREDAI BENGALURU

Amalgamation of 'C' mines: State officials cite CEC opinion

MoEF not amused, seeks clarification

CHIRANJEEVI KULKARNI
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Mines and Geology Department has argued that the amalgamation of erstwhile 'C' category (illegal) mines with virgin forests and other mining lease areas had been done as per the opinion of the Central Empowered Committee (CEC).

The CEC had recently written to the chief secretary, flagging as illegal the state government's move to auction mining leases in Jaisinghpura North and Jaisinghpura South (total 882.48 acres) in Ballari's Sandur. The two leases were created by merging 'C' mines with virgin forest area as well as category "B" and "A" mines. The CEC noted that the Supreme Court had frozen the mining lease boundaries in 2013 and the same shall not be changed.

Following the CEC objections, the forest advisory committee under the Union environment ministry had raised questions over the amalgamation and had sought a clarification from the state government.

In its reply to the CEC, the department said 40 "C" category mines were found to be not viable. "These erstwhile cancelled leases, after losing their identity as mining leases, reverted to the lessor i.e Government of Karnataka...This implies that the State can utilise the reverted area for development/interest of the state," the department said.

The CEC had recently written to the chief secretary, flagging as illegal the state government's move to auction mining leases in Jaisinghpura North and Jaisinghpura South (total 882.48 acres) in Ballari's Sandur. DH FILE PHOTO

The department also quoted an extract from the response received from the CEC in a letter dated January 12, 2018, which suggested the government to alter the lease boundaries. In its letter, the CEC stated that the apex court has lifted the embargo on grant of fresh leases in its November 2, 2012 order. "This judgement also gives liberty to the state govt to identify new mining blocks which may include in part or full cancelled/expired mining lease areas of 'A' or 'B' or 'C' categories or may be entirely new/unexplored areas," the extract said.

Interestingly, the department also quoted the CEC's disclaimer from the same letter. "CEDC has highlighted in para (v) of the CEC letter 12.01.2018 in which it was stated that no authority or body, including CEC, is competent to pass any order/clarification contrary to the orders of the Hon'ble Supreme Court," the department stated.

Further, the department said JSW Steel Limited got legal opinion from former Supreme Court judge Justice B S Chauhan who had stated that "there was no legal infirmity" in notifying a new amalgamated area for grant of mining lease.

Sandur-based activist Sreeshaila Aladahalli, who accessed the department's response through the Right to Information Act, noted that the department was trying to blame the CEC instead of owning up the responsibility and taking corrective measures.

"Considering the CEC's disclaimer that no authority can clarify the 2013 order, the department should have approached the Supreme Court for clarification. Instead, we see an opportunistic reading of the CEC letter," he noted.

Tribal welfare dept plans biometric verification for distribution of nutrition kits

Aims to streamline the process following several complaints

SNEHA RAMESH
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Department of Tribal Welfare is planning an overhaul of the nutrition food kit distribution system for nearly 47,859 tribal families across the state. This initiative aims to ensure the timely delivery of food kits and address quality concerns.

The department plans to implement several measures, including Aadhaar-linked biometric verification and pre-checks of the supplied food items, to streamline the process.

Over the years, complaints have emerged that many tribal communities do not receive food kits on time, while others receive poor-quality kits, undermining the purpose of the program.

"The Public Distribution System (PDS) across the state uses biometric verification, and we have decided to follow the same approach for distributing nutrition food kits to tribal families," Randeep, secretary to the Department of Tribal Welfare, said.

"Although it is not mandatory at this stage, we eventually want to ensure that all tribal families have their Aadhaar linked, and the distribution is carried out through biometric verification. This will enhance transparency and accountability," he said.

District-level officers have also been instructed to verify the quality of the food items before distributing them, ensuring that no substandard kits are handed out.

Many tribal communities had also reported that they had not received food kits for months. Randeep assured that all pending kits would be distributed soon. Moving forward, district officials will be required to ensure that the kits are distributed by the 15th of every month.

"District officers are now required to submit an indent, after a quick verification of the number of tribal families in their districts, by the 5th of each month. Based on this, distribution will take place by the 15th," Randeep added.

In the past, food kits were procured through a decentralised process. To ensure consistent and timely distribution, the department has now shifted to a centralised procurement and distribution system.

Randeep confirmed that all pending kits would soon reach the tribal families.

Hassan accident: KBG to discuss with CM on hike in ex gratia

HASSAN, DHNS: District incharge minister Krishna Byre Gowda has said that he would discuss with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on increasing ex gratia to the families of the 10 people who died in the Hassan mishap on Friday night, as requested by their relatives.

"Their pain cannot be compensated. We are part of their grief, as a responsible government. We have taken all necessary measures," he said.

He held a meeting with officials in Hassan on Friday and visited the injured at hospitals and residences of the deceased.

The minister said that the officials will assess the safety norms on the NH where the mishap occurred. "There is a demand for road widening. Along with Hassan MLA Swaroop Prakash, I will write to NHAI to take necessary steps. We will also seek ex gratia for the families of the deceased from the NHAI," he said.

In a post on social media platform X, Prime Minister Narendra Modi condoled the loss of lives in the mishap and announced ex gratia of Rs 2 lakh for the next of kin of each deceased and Rs 50,000 for the injured.

Actor Darshan's wife reports theft of Rs 3 lakh cash

BENGALURU, DHNS: About Rs 3 lakh in cash is suspected to have been stolen from the flat of actor Darshan's wife Vijayalakshmi in Hosakerehalli, south Bengaluru, last week.

The money was kept in a box inside a wardrobe in Vijayalakshmi's room. It was last seen on September 4 when Vijayalakshmi left for Mysuru after handing over the keys to Darshan's manager, Nagaraju.

In his complaint to CK Achukattu police, Nagaraju said he too left for Mysuru on September 5 and returned to Bengaluru along with Vijayalakshmi on Sunday. Vijayalakshmi noticed the cash missing from the box the following day, after which Nagaraju lodged the complaint on Wednesday.

The complainant has said they suspect household employees may be behind the theft. "The theft is most likely committed by the servant," the investigating officer told *DH*. "Investigation is underway, but we are not sure if it is the servant or someone from the family," the officer added.

CK Achukattu police have registered an FIR under BNS Section 306 (theft committed by a servant) and are investigating.

RAIN TRAVAILS

A view of the waterlogged district stadium following heavy rains in Bidar on Saturday. It rained in the city for the fourth consecutive day. DH PHOTO

Hassan accident toll 10; nine were under 27

Hassan accident, from Page 3

Bhuvanesh, a native of Hassan district, who was beaten up by the public, is also being treated at the hospital under police custody.

A team of doctors finished the post-mortem of all nine bodies, who died on Friday night, by 3 am. They took measures to hand over the bodies to their relatives, informed Hassan District in-Charge Minister Krishna Byre Gowda.

In all 20 people were injured and 18 of them are admitted at Hassan Institute of Medical Sciences (HIMS). Among them, 17 are stable in the wards. One has undergone surgery for a rib fracture. One person in the ICU is stable. Two people are admitted at ICU in a private hospital and are stable. Some suffered dislocations. A team of doctors, led by Hassan district health officer Dr Anil Kumar, is monitoring the injured, Krishna Byre Gowda informed.

He said he got updates through the night from Hassan DC Latha Kumari, SP Mohammed Sujeetha, ZP CEO B R Poornima and doctors - and made necessary arrangements.

There were heart-rending scenes of families grieving over their loved at HIMS and in their houses.

Hutti Gold Mines earns Rs 440 crore profit

LINGSUGUR (RAICHUR DISTRICT), DHNS: The Hutti Gold Mines Ltd (HGML) has reported a profit of Rs 440 crore for the current year, G T Patil, the HGML chairman, said on Saturday.

"The Hutti Gold Mines Ltd has earned a profit of Rs 440 crore in the current year due to steep increase in gold prices. Last year, it had registered a profit of Rs 239 crore after tax. After I took charge as chairman of HGML, I have initiated several welfare measures for workers, including enhanced insurance coverage for all workers. I have directed the managing director of the company to increase the CSR fund by Rs 2.5 crore for the development of the local area.

This apart, 1,000 residential quarters for workers were built at a cost of Rs 1,000 crore and a drinking water project was implemented at Rs 135 crore. Also, the tender process is underway for setting up a solar power plant at the site," Patil told reporters here.

He also added that the company has set an enhanced target for extraction of ore and its processing.

Udupi decked up for Krishna Janmashtami today

UDUPI, DHNS: The temple town is gearing up for a grand celebration of Krishna Janmashtami on Sunday.

Car Street is already abuzz with preparations as 13 beautifully crafted wooden gopuras have been erected for the celebrations. Thousands of devotees are expected to throng the town for the grand annual spectacle.

Paryaya Puthige Mutt has planned massive distribution 1.5 lakh chakkulis and 3.5 lakh laddus to devotees.

Leelothsava, popularly known as Vitlapindi, will take place at 3 pm on Monday around Car Street. The traditional 'Mosaru Kudike' will held be on September 15.

Dad, daughter killed as lorry hits multiple vehicles

Accident, from Page 3

A three-year-old baby and a pregnant woman were among the passengers in the car. The bike driver suffered minor injuries.

"While the two victims were being shifted to an ambulance, the ambulance staff declared them dead. Yesu was the auto driver and his relatives told us that he was taking Jenniffer to the church since she was supposed to get married soon," said a police officer at Kamakshipalya Traffic Police Station.

The police have registered a case and are sifting through CCTV visuals to ascertain the lorry driver's whereabouts. "The lorry was transporting some goods from the nearby industrial area. Once we inquire in the area, we will know about his whereabouts," a senior police official said.

Regular commuters on the road said the traffic police should take some measures as the particular stretch is designed dangerously. "It is a steep down and almost possible that drivers of big vehicles might lose control over their vehicle. Also near the junction, they should at least introduce a speed breaker. This will help streamline traffic and prevent such accidents," said a regular commuter.

Only 12 in 100 patients have hypertension under control: Study

BENGALURU,DHNS

Some of the medical professionals not only track but also send appointment reminders to people diagnosed with hypertension as only 12 among 100 patients have high blood pressure well under control, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO) data.

According to the 2019-21 National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5), hypertension, a silent pandemic, is affecting around 25% of women and 26.9% of men in the above 15-year age group in Karnataka.

A doctor checking blood pressure of a patient.

However, doctors warn that a misconception amongst the patients is that once they are diagnosed and prescribed a medication, they feel the medication is the answer to all the cure. It is not so, they caution.

"A lot of the patients stop consuming tablets once they find out that the blood pressure is under control. The understanding and importance of why the medication should be taken as prescribed to keep the ailment under control is often overlooked," said Dr Om Prakash Bera, Regional Advisor Asia, Global Health Advocacy Incubator.

The private hospitals have a message or call system to remind patients about their appointments, the state government should also come up with an initiative to remind patients about follow ups, he added.

A study called India Hypertension Control Initiative published in the National Institute of Health also proved that public health hypertension control programs can yield substantial improvement in controlling blood pressure.

The doctors also added that the busy schedule of patients is also the prominent reason for avoiding appointments. Dr Kiran Chandrashekar, General Medicine Physician, said, "Despite explaining complications, patients do not show up because of hectic hours. They are stressed and cannot show up because of work."

Hypertension under 40

People in their early 30s and mid 40s, usually considered the most productive part of life professionally and personally, form a majority of the population diagnosed with hypertension, say doctors.

Dr Palleti Siva Karthik Reddy, MBBS MD General Medicine Physician, said, "Hypertension diagnosed in the early stages gives rise to questions about secondary causes such as pheochromocytoma or renal artery stenosis."

If the hypertension remains untreated there are chances of hypertensive retinopathy, hypertensive cardiomyopathy and stroke, he added.

A consultation and check up once in three months is usually advised.

Insect dishes create buzz at Dharwad Krishi Mela

SRINIDHI R
DHARWAD, DHNS

Unusual food items, like silkworm dry chili, silkworm soup, cricket fry, praying mantis tandoori, black soldier fly masala, insect-mix pizza, and grasshopper 65, have raised curiosity among food buffs at the ongoing Krishi Mela on the sprawling campus of University of Agricultural Sciences in Dharwad.

Dishes prepared from as many as 13 insects, including house cricket, field cricket, African migratory locust, grasshopper, giant mealworm beetle, white grub, greater wax moth, lesser wax moth, silkworm pupa and European honeybee, are on display.

The University's Department of Entomology has hosted a unique showcase that features an array of insect-based foods, while educating visitors about the life cycles, characteristics, and varieties of insects.

Participants were given a demonstration about disease-carrying and non-carrying insects, their characteristics and food value.

Food items prepared using edible insects. DH PHOTO

According to entomologists, compared to all other foods, insects are easier to prepare and provide a very high amount of protein, making them excellent food sources. Indians have started showing interest in insect-based foods in recent years, and with this background, the department has been creating awareness through the 'Fascinating World of Insects' exhibition by showcasing dishes made from insects, said research scholar Shivakumar.

"From 6% to 30% protein is available in vegetarian and non-vegetarian foods. Insects contain 50% to 60% protein. Insects are consumed in many countries. Certain tribal communities in India also consume insect foods like red ant chutney, which is a delicacy in some regions," he added.

Government of Karnataka
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PANCHAYAT RAJ ENGINEERING DIVISION KALABURAGI
No : EE/PRED/KLB/KKRDB /TS-5/2025-26/3146 Date : 11/09/2025
TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through E-procurement Two Cover System)
1) Name of work: 1. Improvements and Formation of Roads in Chincholi Taluka Indent No.(1) 16498, 2. Improvements and Formation of Roads in Chittapur Taluka Indent No.(1) 16496, 3. Improvements to Roads in Jewargi Taluka Indent No.(1)16602, 4. Construction of Road in Kalaburagi Taluka for 7 works Indent No.(1) 17961 (2) 17960 (3) 18715 (4) 18735 (5) 18718 (6) 18730 (7) 13562/Call-2, 5. Construction of Road in Sedam Taluka for 11 works Indent No.(1) 17823 (2) 17825 (3) 17826 (4) 17828 (5) 17824 (6) 17827 (7) 17830 (8) 17829 (9) 17821 (10) 17820 (11) 17822, 2) Head of account: **5054 for the year 2024-25**, 3) Amount put to tender: **Minimum Rs. 50,18,706.23, Maximum Rs. 1,67,95,684.40**, 4) Class of Contractor: Class- III and Above, 5) Issue of Blank Tender Documents: **12-09-2025 to 09-10-2025 upto 4.00 pm**, 6) Tender Form Fee: As per KPPP Norms, 7) E.M.D. Fee: **Minimum Rs. 50,500.00, Maximum Rs. 2,52,000.00,** 8) Receipt of completed tender documents: **12-09-2025 to 09-10-2025 upto 4.00 pm**, 9) Technical Bid Opening Date: **10-10-2025 After 4.00 pm**, 10) Financial Bid opening Date: **13-10-2025 After 11.00 am,** 11) For more details contact: Office of the Executive Engineer, Panchayat Raj Engineering Division Opp: Karnataka Grameen Bank (PKGB) Head office, Kusnoor Road, RajapurKalaburagi, 12) Website Address: **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in**
Sd/- Executive Engineer
Panchayat Raj Engineering Division Kalaburagi
DIPR/Kalaburagi/508/KSMC&A/2025-26

Five booked under Pocso in separate cases

YADGIR, DHNS: Five persons have been booked under Pocso Act and Prohibition of Child Marriage Act in two separate cases in district.

In a case under Surpur station limits, a 13-year-old girl was married off by her parents and she gave birth to a baby girl in July 2023. Again, she gave birth to a boy on September 7. Cases have been registered against girl's parents, her husband and his mother. In another case, a youth married a 17-year-old girl he was in love & impregnated her. Police booked him under Pocso Act.

◆ WEATHER ◆

Overview: Rainfall occurred at few places over North Interior and at most places over Coastal Karnataka and South Interior Karnataka
Forecast Sept 14: Rainfall to occur at many places over the state.

INTERIOR NORTH			
Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Belagavi	28.4	21.2	00
Bidar	28	20.8	3.8
Vijayapura	26.2	21.9	0.4
Dharwad	27.6	17	70.6
Haveri	27.4	22	00
Kalaburagi	29.9	22.8	4.1
Raichur	28.8	22.4	8.4
COASTAL			
Honnavar	30.4	25.3	00
Karwar	31	25.2	0.5
Shirali	NA	NA	NA
Mangaluru	31.4	24.6	00

INTERIOR SOUTH			
Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Agumbe	NA	NA	00
Bengaluru	28	21.5	00
Ballari	NA	NA	NA
Chamarajanagar	30.4	21.6	00
Chikkamagaluru	NA	NA	NA
Chitradurga	29.6	21.2	00
Davangere	28	20	00
Hassan	29.2	19.7	00
Mysuru	30.4	19	00
Madikeri	NA	NA	NA
Kolar	NA	NA	NA
OTHER STATIONS			
New Delhi	34.5	25.2	00
Kolkata	34.1	27.7	00
Mumbai	29.5	24.8	07
Chennai	34.6	26.5	00
Pune	28.4	21.4	18
Hyderabad	28.1	22.6	00
Th'puram	35.1	24.3	00

OVER-DRAWING BIG WOE

'Water rise only at surface, hasn't percolated to aquifers'

Rains water hopes for water table, but deeper issues persist

PAVAN KUMAR H
HUBBALLI, DHNS

With four of the five previous monsoons being above normal, groundwater levels have increased. Data shows that 96% of the monitored wells in the state have shown an increase of 0-10 meters below ground level (mbgl) during the last five Novembers. The decadal mean by 2024 had shown a water rise in around 74% of the wells monitored.

While the government claims that this increase in groundwater is the result of filling up lakes, desilting works and other projects taken under MGNREGS, experts say excess rainfall in the last five years has only ensured that the surface-level water has improved and not the deeper aquifer that could improve long-term availability of groundwater.

Veena Srinivasan, executive director of WELLS Lab, says with four of five last years receving above normal rainfall, the unconfined aquifer (surface-level) groundwater was bound to increase.

"The government has taken several steps including filling of lakes and works under Atal Bhujal Yojana, Mission Amrit Sarovar groundwater recharge and rainwater harvesting works through MGNREGS," she said.

However, given that a large part of Karnataka is on hard-rock aquifers, percolation of rainwater to deeper level is slow and scanty, Veena added.

"The overall stress on groundwater in Karnataka is immense and the fact that farmers and public are digging deeper for borewells and open-wells shows that groundwater recovery may not be as high".

The Karnataka Groundwater Authority monitors on average 1,100 to 1,300 wells once every four months.

According to data provided by the Authority, almost all of the 31 districts witnessed a rise in groundwater between zero and 10 mbgl during the post-monsoon study.

However, the bigger picture that the district-wise ground water level data highlights is the non-increasing of groundwater-level between 10 to 40 mbgl. The deeper the aquifer fills, the larger the quantity it stores.

Take for example, in the post monsoon of 2024, of the 1,136 observation wells monitored in November 2024, nearly 32% of them showed a rise of groundwater by 2 mbgl, 36.4% between 2 and 5 mbgl and 27.3% between 5 and 10 mbgl.

Only 4% of monitored wells in the state (majority of them in the three coastal districts) showed groundwater level improving beyond 10 and 20 mbgl and none beyond 20 mbgl.

A lake at Agasga village in Belagavi district, which has been rejuvenated under 'Amrut Sarovar' project through MGNREGS, has improved the water table in the village.

Rainwater harvesting expert Devaraj Reddy says unlike in the past when rainfall was continuous and for prolonged duration, currently we are receiving intense and short bursts of spells.

"A majority of the rainwater is running off the surface. The level of percolation is very low. Only the surface-level or visible water is restoring, while the deeper aquifer has remained empty. In many districts, extraction of groundwater is much higher than its recharge".

'Monitor defunct wells too'

Experts point out that the methodology adopted by the government is skewed as they have been monitoring open wells on survivor bias, with dry or defunct wells being systematically excluded from analysis.

Vivek Singh Grewal, hydrogeologist at Well Labs, says one of the biggest loopholes of the data collected by the Central Groundwater Board is that they often discard the dried wells and monitor wells that are in the valleys, which naturally get higher level of water.

"In hard rock areas, instead of measuring how much mbgl the groundwater has increased, the authorities should monitor when the wells are getting dried. Due to low aquifer storage, a majority of the wells in Karnataka dry up if a couple of consecutive years are dry," he says.

A senior officer at Director of the Karnataka Groundwater Directorate says that groundwater-levels in coastal areas, which have been receiving excess rainfall, have improved substantially, while Bengaluru continues to extract groundwater beyond its recharging capacity.

Kolar, one of the highest groundwater-exploited districts, is also witnessing a rise in water-levels after implementation of Koramangala-Challaghatta (KC) Valley project.

"The department has been encouraging people to opt for rainwater harvesting and use modern technology in cultivation. These efforts will surely improve groundwater levels," he says.

Non-updated nomenclature of hosp can't be ground to deny med reimbursement: HC

Directs higher edu dept to reconsider petitioner's plea in six weeks

AMBARISH B
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Dharwad bench of the Karnataka high court has said that medical reimbursement cannot be denied solely due to a change in the name of the hospital, even though it remains the same entity that was previously recognised.

"Denial of reimbursement merely on account of non-updated nomenclature, when the entity remains the same, is arbitrary and legally unsustainable," Justice Suraj Govindaraj said while directing the Higher Education Department to reconsider within six weeks the application filed by the petitioner.

The petition was filed by Shivanandappa Doddagoudar, associate professor in a government first grade college at Ranebennur, Haveri district. He challenged the endorsements issued in July and August 2024, by the Higher Education Department and Suvarna Arogya Suraksha Trust, rejecting his medical reimbursement claim of Rs 13,95,464. The petitioner contended that rejection was solely on the ground that the hospital does not find a place in the government-recognised list of private hospitals eligible for medical reimbursement.

According to the petitioner, 'Kasturba Medical College Hospital, Manipal', where he took treatment, was in the approved list. However, pursuant to a formal request dated March 23, 2021, the hospital sought a change of name to 'Kasturba Hospital, Manipal', in conformity with the registration certificate issued by the Karnataka Private Medical Establishment Authority, Udupi. He said the application was rejected since the updated name had not been incorporated in the government list.

Justice Suraj Govindaraj noted that the purpose of maintaining a recognised list of private hospitals under Clause (ff) of Rule 3 of the Karnataka Government Servants (Medical Attendance) Rules, 1963, is to ensure that services are availed from vetted and approved institutions, and the said recognition involves inspection and assessment of the hospital's infrastructure and services.

"It is evident that if treatment is availed from an unrecognised hospital, reimbursement is not permissible. However, in the present case, Kasturba Medical College Hospital, Manipal was an approved institution," Justice Suraj Govindaraj said.

The court further said, "The respondent authorities were obligated to verify the request and update the recognised list after following the due procedure. Their failure to do so cannot prejudice the petitioner."

Priyank slams BJP over 'silence' in Dharmasthala case

BENGALURU, DHNS: Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (RDPR) Minister Priyank Kharge slammed the BJP on Saturday for "forgetting" Dharmasthala and urged the leaders of the saffron party to clarify whether they were in favour of Sowjanya's family or those whom the family was accusing.

Taking to X, Priyank said: "Why are BJP leaders suddenly silent about Dharmasthala?? BJP's drama on protecting the religion is just limited to four days?? Soujanya's relative Vittal Gowda has revealed the troubling fact that Bangle Gudda at Dharmasthala has loads of skeletal remains. There are reports that this place literally looks like a battlefield."

The minister wondered why the BJP was silent on Vittal Gowda's statement. "What do BJP leaders, who visited Sowjanya's house, say?? Let BJP leaders clarify whether they are in favour of Soujanya's family or in favour of those whom the family is accusing."

He was referring to BJP State President B Y Vijayendra's visit to Sowjanya's house and his interaction with her mother on September 1 after BJP's Dharmasthala Chalo on the same day.

D'sthala case: SIT continues to grill activists, YouTuber

MANGALURU, DHNS: The Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the mass burial case in Dharmasthala continued its questioning of activists Jayant T, Girish Mattanavar, slain Sowjanya's uncle Vittal Gowda, his close associate Pradeep, and YouTuber Abhishek on Saturday.

SIT SPs Jithendra Kumar Dayama and Simon C.A. were present and documented their statements.

Meanwhile, activist Mahesh Shetty Thimarody has appealed to supporters of Sowjanya's cause to offer prayers at mutts, temples, and daivastanas on the day of Sankramana (Sept 17).

He urged that these prayers would strengthen the fight for justice and guide the SIT officials in the right direction to uncover the truth. In a video message, Thimarody reiterated his demand for justice for Sowjanya and the victims in the mass burial case.

He claimed attempts were being made to weaken the SIT setup by the government.

"The SIT, constituted by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Home Minister G Parameshwara, is working effectively. However, a few vested interests are trying to dilute its efforts," he said.

To further strengthen the probe, Thimarody announced plans for a silent protest in Belthangady, inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's peace mantra. The date for the protest will be announced soon, he added.

Joshi sees a plot to end Dharmasthala SIT probe

HUBBALLI, DHNS: Alleging that a section of individuals in the Congress and vested interests outside Karnataka were involved in the 'conspiracy' to defame Dharmasthala and its Dharmadhikari Veerendra Heggade, Union Minister Pralhad Joshi on Saturday claimed efforts were under way to bring the SIT probe to a premature end.

Pralhad Joshi

Joshi told reporters here that attempts were being made to fix the blame on the "masked" man. "They are saying he is mad. Four or five other individuals, the names of whom surfaced during probe must also be interrogated," said Joshi.

The minister said that the manner in which the government handled such a sensitive case was "unfortunate".

"I have demanded court-monitored probe, since the National Investigstion Agency can be roped in only if there is evidence of terrorists' involvement," he said.

CRAFT & THE AIRCRAFT

The marvellous Yakshagana sculpture installed at the entrance of the Mangaluru international airport is bound to promote the popular art form of coastal Karnataka.

Govt 'insulting' Dalits to 'favour' minorities: Chalavadi

BENGALURU, DHNS: Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in the Legislative Council Chalavadi Narayanswamy on Saturday accused the Congress-led government of 'insulting' Dalits and "favouring" the minorities.

Chalavadi Narayanswamy

Interacting with journalists, the LoP said: "More than minority appeasement, they have developed fear now. This government doesn't have the power to control minorities. Thus, the state government isn't permitting Ganesha festivals and causing major problems."

Claiming that there had been no clashes during Ganesha festival celebrations earlier, Narayanaswamy charged Chief Minister Siddaramaiah with 'withdrawing' cases against minorities involved in criminal cases. "The government should do things that people praise instead of misleading them. That way, things will become tough for upcoming governments. The government should come out of its wrong path and tread the path of the Constitution," said Chalavadi.

Om Birla moots index to rank legislatures

BENGALURU, PTI

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Saturday mooted setting up a national legislative index to rank assemblies and councils on the basis of their performance.

He said performance could be assessed on parameters such as number of sittings held every year, productivity of House, quality of debates, adoption of technology and efficacy of various committees.

"We will take a view on the national legislative index at the meeting of presiding officers in Lucknow in January next year," Birla told reporters on the sidelines of the 11th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association-India Region Conference that concluded here.

Addressing the valedictory session of the Conference, Birla asked all legislatures to establish standards to ensure quality of debates.

Governor Thaawar Chand Gehlot also voiced concern over repeated disruptions in House proceedings and asserted that debate and discussion were the soul of any legislature.

Expressing concern about "planned deadlock" in the House, Birla underscored the need for comprehensive dialogue among parties and elected representatives.

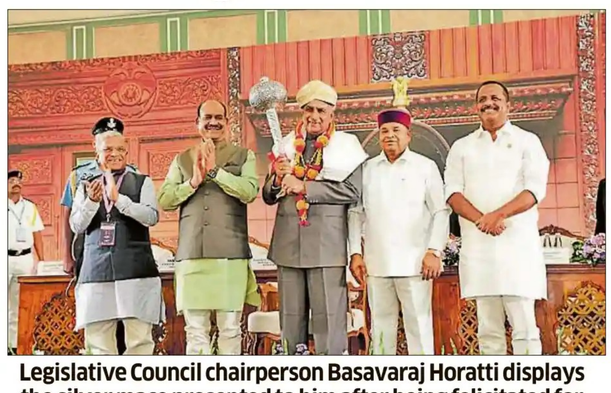
He said rather than halting proceedings of legislatures based on ideological or political differences, lawmakers must resolve to keep the House functioning.

The LS speaker batted for increasing the duration of debates and number of sittings of legislature sessions.

"We keep discussing with parties that there shouldn't be a deadlock in Parliament. There can differences, but the House should be the centre of interactions," Birla said.

He said no party had written to him on boycotting the joint committee of Parliament to examine three Bills that seek removal of top government functionaries arrested for 30 consecutive days on serious charges.

"The JPC will be constituted once I receive the names of MPs from parties," the speaker said.



Legislative Council chairperson Basavaraj Horatti displays the silver mace presented to him after being felicitated for completing 45 years in the Council and winning eight times in a row from West Teachers' constituency, on the concluding day of the 11th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association-India Region Conference in Bengaluru on Saturday. Rajya Sabha deputy chairperson Harivansh Narayan Singh, Lok Sabha speaker Om Birla, Governor Thaawar Chand Gehlot and Assembly Speaker U T Khader look on.

Graft charges: 2 employees of Bidar vet varsity sacked

BIDAR, DHNS: Two contract workers of Karnataka Veterinary, Animal and Fisheries Sciences University (KVAFSU) have been sacked over their alleged involvement in misappropriation of funds.

Registrar P T Ramesh has ordered sacking Someshwar, an assistant in the finance controller office of the varsity, and Tukaram Mehtre, office attendant at the research directorate.

"A show-cause notice was issued to the suspects. The abovementioned employees' reply to the notice was found insufficient and unacceptable. Hence, they were sacked," the registrar said in the order.

HC orders Commercial Taxes dept to refund Flipkart within six weeks

Directs dept to pay remaining pre-deposit and interest thereon in cash

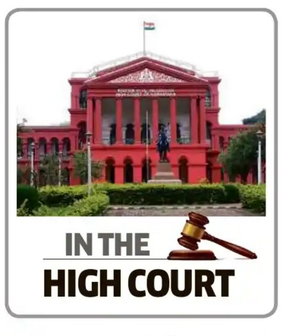
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Karnataka High Court has ordered the Commercial Taxes Department to refund Flipkart India Private Limited within six weeks the remaining Rs 16,11,19,226 pre-deposit in cash and also to pay interest in cash, applicable on the total deposit of Rs 23,01,70,324.

Justice S R Krishna Kumar passed this order in a petition filed by Flipkart.

For the tax period 2011-12 to 2014-15, reassessment orders were issued against Flipkart, raising a total demand of Rs 23.01 crore under the Karnataka Value Added Tax Act, 2003 (KVAT Act).

This was towards mobile phone chargers considering it as unscheduled commodities. The matter reached finality with the high court in 2023 dismissing the petitions filed by the Commercial Taxes Department challenging the orders by the KAT ordering refund.



Moving the present petition before the high court, the Flipkart contended that while the department refunded 30% of the pre-deposit (Rs 6.9 crore) paid in cash, it continues to withhold the remaining 70% (Rs 16.11 crore), which was paid using Input Tax Credit (ITC), available in its Electronic Credit Ledger (ECL).

On the other hand, the department contended that as per the April 16, 2018, circular, the company would be entitled to recover the pre-deposit through the credit ledger alone and not by way of cash refund. It was further stated that since only arrears are recoverable by reversing ITC and the same does not apply to voluntary payment.

Justice Krishna Kumar examined Section 142 KGST Act and said it essentially outlines transitional provisions for handling goods and services tax during the switch from the earlier regime to GST and noted that the expression 'refund in cash' has been specifically provided.

The court also observed that the 70% pre-deposit was not voluntary but for the purpose of filing the appeal. Irrespective of the circular cited by the department, the court said specific provisions contained in section 142 (3), (5), 6(a), 7(b), 8(b) and 9(b), categorically provide for refund by way of cash. "to put it differently, the statutory scheme underlying the aforesaid provisions will clearly indicate that all types/kinds of refund found to be payable/admissible under any of the various situations/circumstances enumerated in Section 142(3) to 142(9) of the KGST Act would entail refund back in cash only and as such the contention urged by the respondents cannot be accepted," the court said.

Re-assessment orders were challenged

Several assesses had challenged the re-assessment orders issued by the Commercial Tax Department during the pre-GST period. The department had claimed that a mobile charger is not an integral part of the mobile phone to treat among 'composite goods'. The high court upheld the orders passed by the KAT and said that a mobile phone charger sold along with a mobile phone is a composite part in the package and tax cannot be levied differently on them.

Cloudburst in Himachal leaves vehicles buried, farms damaged

SHIMLA, PTI: Several vehicles were buried under debris, and crops were damaged due to a cloudburst in Himachal Pradesh's Bilaspur district in the early hours of Saturday, officials said.

No casualty was reported in the cloudburst that occurred around 3 am in the Gutrahan village in the Naina Devi assembly constituency.

Gushing waters carrying debris scattered all over agricultural lands, said Kashmir Singh, a villager whose land and crops have been damaged.

Four vehicles were buried under debris, said Deputy Commissioner of Bilaspur Rahul Kumar, adding that crop damage is being assessed and relief will be provided after receiving the report.

As soon as the information about the incident was received, officials reached the spot and took stock of the situation. The Public Works Department has begun removing the debris to restore traffic at the earliest.

There are reports of water and debris damaging over 6 houses in the Kamlari and Ghatasni villages of Bhattiyat assembly constituency.

Vaishno Devi yatra postponed amid incessant heavy rains

JAMMU, PTI: The pilgrimage to the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine, which was scheduled to restart on Sunday after remaining suspended for 19 days, has been postponed again till further orders amid incessant rains, the shrine board said on Saturday.

The pilgrimage was suspended on August 26, hours before a major landslide hit the route leading to the shrine, which resulted in the death of 34 pilgrims and injuries to 20 others.

In a post in C, the Shrine board said, "Due to incessant rain at Bhawan and the track, commencement of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Yatra scheduled from September 14 stands postponed till further order. Devotees are requested to stay updated through official communication channels."

It had, a couple of days ago, decided to resume the pilgrimage on Sunday, but the inclement weather once again played spoilsport.

Can't be silent as taxpayers' home dreams shatter: SC to Centre

Urges creation of revival fund to rescue stalled housing projects

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court has said the Centre cannot continue to be a silent spectator while taxpayers' desire for a dream home is shattered.

It noted that an average homebuyer desires a stable roof over their family's head, and the anxiety of not having a home despite paying a fortune was bound to take a serious toll on health, productivity, and dignity.

A bench of Justices J B Pardiwala and R Mahadevan directed the Union government to consider establishing a revival fund under the National Asset Reconstruction Company Ltd (NARCL) or expanding the SWAMIH (Special Window for Affordable and Mid-Income Housing) Fund to provide bridge-financing for stressed projects undergoing the Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process, thereby preventing liquidation of viable projects and safeguarding homebuyer interests.

The court also gave a slew of directions to concerned authorities in the larger interests of bona fide homebuyers and also for the stability of the real-estate sector.

In the judgment delivered on September 12, the court said a home was not merely a roof over one's head but a reflection of one's hopes and dreams.

The bench said an average homebuyer usually poured their hard-earned money into the pockets of a developer, and it was therefore imperative that their life savings culminate in timely possession of the promised home.

"Article 21 would mandate nothing less. In Samatha Vs State of AP (1997), this court reiterated that the right to social and economic justice as well as the right to shelter are fundamental rights encompassed within the ambit of the right to life," it said.

'Fundamental human need'

The bench said it would be thoroughly erroneous to treat homebuying as a mere commercial transaction, and emphasised that housing was neither a luxury nor a commodity for speculation: It was a fundamental human need.

"The right to secure, peaceful, and timely possession of one's home is therefore a facet of the fundamental right to shelter enshrined under Article 21," it said.

"Ensuring timely project completion must be a cornerstone of India's urban policy. Equally, the state must proactively address the menace of a parallel cash economy and speculative practices in the real-estate market, which artificially inflate housing costs and enable 'trigger-happy' investors seeking easy exits to jeopardise the interests of genuine end-users," it said.

The apex court stressed that it was imperative that RERA authorities were not reduced to toothless tigers. "They must be equipped with adequate infrastructure, empowered tribunals, and effective enforcement mechanisms so that their orders are implemented swiftly, in letter and spirit," it said.

It also directed that a comprehensive periodic performance audit by the CAG be carried out, with reports placed in the public domain in a form comprehensible even to laypersons.

Meiteis, Kukis 'disappointed' as PM offers no solution to conflict

People brave rain and slush to hear Modi

SUMIR KARMAKAR
IMPHAL, DHNS

Imphal or Kuki-dominated Churachandpur in Manipur remained shut on Saturday. Residents braved rain and slush to go hear Prime Minister Narendra Modi, but most returned "disappointed", saying he offered "nothing concrete" to end the conflict, which has stretched for over two years now.

"He stressed peace but offered no solution to the problems. We did not come here to hear about the Nepal situation, GST, or developmental projects," said Surajit Khumakcham, a local trader who shuttered his shop to hear what Modi had to offer.

Long queues were seen outside the historic Kangla Fort since noon, with most people drenched by rain and grappling with mud and slush on their way to the large pandal where Modi delivered his 23-minute address to people from the Meitei-dominated Valley.

People roared as Modi entered the venue at 3.43 pm, chanting "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" before and after his speech.

There was a "boycott call" by CorCom, a forum of six Valley-based armed groups, against Modi's visit — his first since the Meitei-Kuki conflict erupted on May 3, 2023. But many in the crowd confirmed that Imphal remained shut as residents wanted to hear what he had to offer to end the conflict.

"Mieteis wanted to hear what the Central government had to say about our demand for the NRC to detect Chin-Kuki illegal migrants in our state and the steps it had taken to crack down on poppy cultivation and smuggling. We were hoping for a solution from the PM," local student leader Oinam Devendra Meetei told *DH*. "He talked about returning displaced persons to their homes. How can they return without a solution to the conflict?"

An almost similar sentiment prevailed in Kuki-dominated Churachandpur town, where hundreds lined the road with Tricolours in their hands as Modi's cavalcade made it to the Peace Ground. This town, too, remained shut as most residents braved rain and slush to hear him.

"We were very excited when he heard about Modi's visit. It came as a ray of hope for us. But we are hurt and disappointed with the way he avoided a solution," Kuki women's rights leader Mary Hmar said.

"We are disappointed as he did not talk about our pleas for a separate administration. Instead, he stressed a bridge of trust between the hills and the Valley. It was nothing but a slap on our face," said Henry Doungel, a displaced Kuki who fled Imphal during the violence and has been living in a relief camp in Churachandpur. "Now, let's see what our leaders and civil society organisations decide, because Modi did not offer any solution."

People walk through muddy ground after attending a public meeting addressed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Imphal on Saturday. REUTERS

Families of missing and displaced meet PM, seek help

IMPHAL, DHNS: Prime Minister Narendra Modi met families of missing persons and the internally displaced people during his visit to Manipur on Saturday.

As the stalemate over finding a solution to the conflict has spanned more than two years, the pain and agony of the family members of at least 34 persons, who went missing during the conflict, and those displaced, perhaps, remain unheard. On Saturday, the families submitted memorandums to the PM seeking justice and rehabilitation.

"Not less than 34 people have officially disappeared in the past two years. Families wait in agony for closure and justice with no access to compensation or relief because they have no death certificate. Many kin and kith of the victims are on the verge of exceeding the age bar for jobs, which shall only compound their tragedies, said a memorandum submitted by Souls Offered Unitedly for a Lustrated Society (SOULS), an organisation supporting such families.

"Such families have been denied access to compensation, government jobs, or legal relief, as the mandatory seven-year waiting period for declaring a missing person as dead under Section 108 of the Indian Evidence Act remains in force. These families, whose members have gone missing, are also predominantly IDPs, making them live in a double jeopardy," President of SOULS, R K Bijayalaxmi Devi said.

They said the seven-year norm for issuing "presumed death" certificates be bypassed, as was done by the government in case of those who had gone missing during the 2004 Tsunami and Uttarakhand floods.

Three organisations representing over 13,000 displaced Meiteis also submitted a memorandum to Modi seeking a solution to the conflict and thereby facilitating their return to their own homes.

The organisations included: Churachandpur Meitei United Committee, Meitei Council Moreh, and Committee on Protection of Meitei Victims, Moreh.

They sought Modi's intervention for necessary arrangements for resettlements, reconstruction of the houses destroyed during conflict, arranging the lost documents, steps for the education of their kids, livelihood support, and proper security arrangements, among others.

'Farce, tokenism': Kharge slams Modi's 'pit stop' in Manipur

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Congress on Saturday attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi over his 'less than five-hour' visit to Manipur, with party chief Mallikarjun Kharge calling it a "farce, tokenism, and a grave insult to the wounded people".

Recalling that Manipur witnessed 864 days of violence in which 300 lives were lost, 67,000 displaced, and over 1,500 injured, he said, Modi had made 46 foreign trips since violence erupted in May 2023 but did not visit Manipur once.

"Your three-hour pit shop in Manipur is not compassion – it is farce, tokenism, and a grave insult to wounded people," he said, adding the visit was "nothing but a cowardly escape from hearing the cries of people in relief camps".

Alleging that the 'double engine' government has 'bulldozed innocent lives', Kharge stated that the 'gross incompetence and complicity' of Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah and '"betrayal' of communities was 'shielded from scrutiny' by imposing President's rule in the state.

Kharge further said the 'grand ceremony' to welcome Modi was a "cruel prick to the wounds of those still suffering because of your own abdication of basic Constitutional responsibilities. In your own words... Where is your 'raj dharma?"

Claiming that Modi was treating his visit as a 'PR event', Congress General Secretary (Organisation) KC Venugopal said the visit was a "display of how sorely lacking in empathy and compassion" a leader can be.

"This visit is a half-hearted measure and is clubbed with a visit to Mizoram. Neither has his government presented a solution to address the deep social rift that caused the civil war, nor do they have the courage to bring warring groups together and make a genuine attempt at peace," he said.

Congress General Secretary (Communications) Jairam Ramesh said, "The people of Manipur have waited patiently for the prime minister. He finally obliged them.

However, he was in state, from landing to take-off, for less than five hours. The PM has the time (and the inclination) to spend days campaigning and traveling across the world. But is Manipur worth only so much to him?"

Prime Minister Narendra Modi during laying of foundation stone and inauguration of development works worth Rs 9,000 crore virtually from Lengpui Airport near Aizawl. He also addressed a pubic rally virtually as he could not reach the venue due to heavy rain. PTI

Modi congratulates Karki, lauds youth for new dawn in Nepal

ANIRBAN BHAUMIK
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday congratulated Nepal's newly appointed PM Sushila Karki and reached out to the country's youth for signalling the advent of a new dawn in Kathmandu.

The PM praised Nepal's citizens for upholding democratic values through the turbulence, subtly indicating that New Delhi would stay away from the controversy over the dissolution of the parliament, soon after Karki was sworn in on Friday.

New Delhi is likely to seek early engagement with Karki and extend an invitation to her for a visit to India.

In a post on X, Modi extended his best wishes to Karki, saying "India remains firmly committed to the peace, progress and prosperity of the people of Nepal."

Speaking at a rally in Imphal later in the day, Modi again congratulated Karki. "India and Nepal have been close friends bound by shared history, faith and cultural ties, and India would always stand firmly with the people of the neighbouring country during its transitional phase."

"Today, from this land of Manipur, I will also talk to my colleagues in Nepal... I am confident that she (Karki) will pave the way for peace, stability and prosperity in Nepal. Sushila Ji's taking oath as the first woman prime minister of Nepal is a very good example of women's empowerment," he said.

He also lauded the students and youths of Nepal. "Over the past few days, young men and women in Nepal have been seen working hard, cleaning and painting the roads. I have also seen their pictures on social media," he said.

Kerala clears key bills on sandalwood and wildlife

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, PTI

The Kerala government on Saturday approved two draft bills aimed at addressing long-standing issues — the cutting and sale of sandalwood trees on private lands, and the growing human-wildlife conflict.

At a special cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, the draft Kerala Forest (Amendment) Bill, 2025 was cleared, allowing private landowners to cut and sell sandalwood trees with Forest Department permission. Currently, the law only allows the felling of dead or dangerous trees, with landowners liable even if their own trees are stolen.

Forest Minister A K Saseendran said the amendment is expected to boost sandalwood cultivation by assuring farmers the right to profits — with prices ranging from Rs 4,000 to Rs 7,000 per kg.

The bill also proposes allowing the compounding of certain forest offences, with judicial approval, to reduce the legal burden on landowners. However, cutting sandalwood on revenue-assigned government lands will remain prohibited.

Killing of wild animals

The cabinet also approved the Wildlife Protection (Amendment) Bill, 2025, marking the first time a state has moved to amend the central Wildlife (Protection) Act. The bill empowers the Chief Wildlife Warden to order the immediate killing of wild animals that enter inhabited areas and attack or injure people — bypassing lengthy central procedures.

Vijayan had earlier flagged central laws as obstacles during emergencies.

The amendment is likely to have political resonance ahead of the local body and Assembly elections, as demand for a permanent solution has grown stronger in affected regions.

OTHER DECISIONS

- The Kerala Cabinet on Saturday cleared a draft bill to legalise banned traditional agricultural sports, including bull and cattle races.
- Nod to a draft bill aimed at protecting the right to housing in cases where people risk losing their only residence due to loan defaults.

Top Maoist Sujatha surrenders after 43 years underground

S N V SUDHIR
HYDERABAD, DHNS

Top Naxal leader Pothula Padmavathi, alias Sujatha, 62, who had been underground for 43 years, surrendered to police in the presence of Telangana DGP Dr Jitender on Saturday here.

Sujatha serves as the only woman Central Committee Member (CCM) of the now outlawed CPI (Maoist) party. She carried a bounty of Rs 25 lakh, which will now be awarded to her upon surrender.

Her husband, Mallojula Koteshwar Rao alias Kishenji, who served as both a CCM and head of the West Bengal committee, was killed in an encounter in 2011. The couple had one daughter.

Sujatha is a native of Penchikalpadu village in Jogulamba Gadwal district of Telangana. Her father, Thimma Reddy, came from an agricultural family that owned considerable farmland.

While pursuing her second-year Intermediate studies at Government Junior College, Gadwal, Sujatha was influenced by Marxist-Leninist ideology through her cousins, Patel Sudhakar Reddy alias Suryam, who was also a CCM and died in 2009 during an exchange of fire, and Pothula Sudershan Reddy alias RK. Inspired by their ideology, she joined the CPI(ML) People's War Group in December 1982.

"In May 2025, due to deteriorating health, Sujatha expressed her desire to leave the CPI (Maoist)... Her decision reflects a personal need to prioritise her well-being after decades of underground life. She expressed her intention to lead a normal life, take care of her health, and live peacefully with her family by availing rehabilitation measures extended by the government," said Jitender.

St Mary's Island joins Unesco tentative list

NEW DELHI, PTI: Seven new properties, including Deccan Traps at Panchgani and Mahabaleshwar in Maharashtra, and Natural Heritage of Tirumala Hills in Andhra Pradesh, have been added to the Tentative List of Unesco's World Heritage for India, according to officials.

The Permanent Delegation of India to Unesco said the addition of these properties highlight India's "commitment to the preservation and conservation of its rich cultural heritage".

In a post on X on Friday, India at Unesco said, "The Permanent Delegation of India to Unesco is happy to announce that India's 7 properties have been added to the Tentative List of Unesco's World Heritage Convention."

These seven properties under the natural category include Deccan Traps at Panchgani and Mahabaleshwar (Maharashtra); Geological Heritage of St Mary's Island Cluster (Udupi, Karnataka); Meghalayan Age Caves (East Khasi Hills, Meghalaya); Naga Hill Ophiolite (Kiphire, Nagaland), India at Unesco said in a statement.

Other properties are Natural Heritage of Erra Matti Dibbalu (Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh); Natural Heritage of Tirumala Hills (Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh); and Natural Heritage of Varkala (Kerala), it said.

SAFFRON CELEBRATIONS

Forestation to exhibition: BJP plans month-long bash for Modi's birthday

AMRITA MADHUKALYA
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The BJP is planning a month-long celebration to mark Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday, which includes planting 75,000 trees and a photo exhibition on his life.

Union minister Bhupender Yadav and BJP national general secretary Sunil Bansal said all districts across India would host the exhibitions from September 21.

The BJP top brass has asked all its MPs to organise health camps on Modi's birthday on September 17, and to mandatorily buy khadi on October 2, Mahatma Gandhi's birthday. The decision was made during the September 6-8 "Sansad Karyashala".

Lawmakers have been asked to drive up khadi products' sales on October 2, and given targets. If they cannot meet them, they are to take khadi sellers to areas where more people can buy their wares.

This is part of the three key directives given to MPs during the three-day meeting.

MPs have also been asked to conduct "Namo Marathons" in 100 cities on the PM's birthday, in which more than 10,000 youth should take part. They will be carried out as a message to promote the Fit India and Nasha Mukt Bharat initiatives.

Apart from that, MPs have been asked to carry out the "Sansad Khelo Mahotsav" from Deen Dayal Upadhyay's birthday on September 25 to Atal Bihari Vajpayee's birthday on December 25, as part of which lawmakers will have to conduct sports festivals in villages. This is in line with India's 2036 Olympics bid.

Modi told MPs in the first two days that to ensure that GST benefits reached the common man, all of them must organise 20-25 business conferences in their constituencies, catering to small trader groups.

"He also highlighted one of the boldest reforms — the ban on online paid gaming and gambling. Despite revenue loss, the government took this decision in the interest of India's youth and society. Modi urged MPs to mobilise women and youth groups to spread awareness," said Laxman.

SPOTLIGHT ON FRONTIER

Tatak says movement against large dams is led by people

Arunachal's tribal lawyer rekindles mega dam debate

SUMIR KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI, DHNS

"Sorry, I can't disclose my present location," Bhanu Tatak told *DH* over the phone hours after immigration authorities stopped her at Delhi airport on September 7 from boarding a flight to Dublin, Ireland.

The Dublin City University had invited Tatak, a lawyer in her late 20s from Arunachal Pradesh, to study history, literature, philosophy and sociology as a "visiting specialist" for three months. Her fellowship was scheduled to begin on September 8, but she missed it as the immigration staff reportedly cited a "Look Out Circular" issued by the Arunachal Pradesh Police against her.

"Look Out Circulars are issued against terrorists. Am I a terrorist?" asked Tatak. "The Arunachal Police have registered false cases against me because I am with the people fighting against large dams. The case for which I was denied my educational trip was already dismissed in court." She feared disclosing her location might lead the police to her before she could move court against the "false case".

Tatak belongs to the Adi tribe and is the legal advisor of the Siang Indigenous Farmers' Forum (SIFF), a people's movement against the Siang Upper Multipurpose project. Her experience at Delhi airport once again brought the issue of large dams in ecologically-sensitive Arunachal Pradesh to the national spotlight.

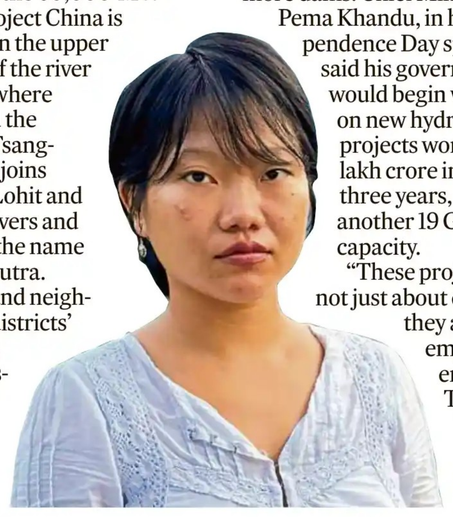
Tatak said she wanted the focus to be turned from her to the issue: "It's a people's movement, I am just a part of the legal team that is assisting the people being harassed or arrested on false, fabricated charges."

The Siang district has been the flashpoint of recent agitations against large dams in India's easternmost state. Tension still prevails in villages like Beging, where anti-dam activists stopped a proposed feasibility study for the Siang project. Central paramilitary forces have been deployed in the areas where the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) seeks to carry out the study.

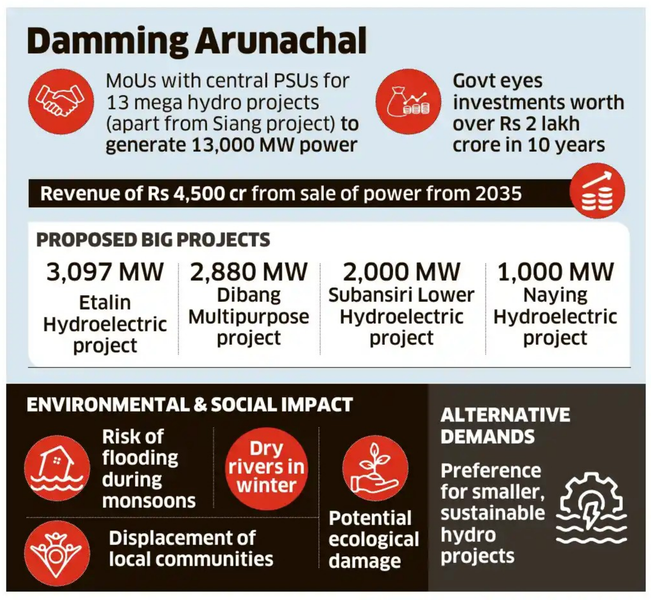
The project is being planned on the Siang river, with the government saying it was to counter the possible adverse impact of the 60,000-MW power project China is building in the upper reaches of the river in Tibet, where it is called the Yarlung Tsangpo. Siang joins Assam's Lohit and Dibang rivers and assumes the name Brahmaputra.

Siang and neighbouring districts' residents are opposing the project, fearing a serious adverse impact on the environment and their livelihood. Meanwhile, the state government is pushing for more dams. Chief Minister Pema Khandu, in his Independence Day speech, said his government would begin work on new hydropower projects worth Rs 2 lakh crore in the next three years, adding another 19 GW of capacity.

"These projects are not just about energy; they are about empowerment. They will bring in over Rs 4,000 crore annually as free power to the state and Rs 750 crore to support local area development. Every year, nearly Rs 2,000 crore in dividends will flow directly to our state. That means better roads, better schools, and better lives."



Bhanu Tatak


Damming Arunachal
MoUs with central PSUs for 13 mega hydro projects (apart from Siang project) to generate 13,000 MW power
Govt eyes investments worth over Rs 2 lakh crore in 10 years
Revenue of Rs 4,500 cr from sale of power from 2035
PROPOSED BIG PROJECTS
3,097 MW Etalin Hydroelectric project
2,880 MW Dibang Multipurpose project
2,000 MW Subansiri Lower Hydroelectric project
1,000 MW Naying Hydroelectric project
ENVIRONMENTAL & SOCIAL IMPACT
Risk of flooding during monsoons
Dry rivers in winter
Displacement of local communities
Potential ecological damage
ALTERNATIVE DEMANDS
Preference for smaller, sustainable hydro projects

Meanwhile, Tatak said the villagers were opposing only large dams, and they favoured small ones to generate power for development. "We are ready to talk to the government. We are not against development. But we want development that takes care of the ecology and the people as well," she said, reiterating that the government might arrest her or a few villagers, but the agitation would not stop.

The young lawyer, who studied in Delhi University's Miranda House college, took to activism early in her field visits as part of fellowships or research work. In 2020, she started volunteering online for the Dibang Resistance Movement, a forum fighting against the 2,880-MW hydropower project on the Dibang river. Her life took a turn when she was named the "main instigator" behind a group of local tribal youths arrested for defacing a mural on the wall of the state secretariat at Itanagar as part of the "No more dams" campaign.

"Many villagers have supported the Siang project by signing MoUs with the state government. Only a few youths are trying to instigate the villagers. They are misguiding them with false information," a government official said.

Tatak, however, argued that the protests were not a new phenomenon in the state: "Arunachal Pradesh's tribals have been fighting against large dams for three generations now. I am just a part of the legal team. Like me, there are a few more lawyers and local youths helping the people. We are just a legal shield for the villagers."

The police said Tatak faces "10-12 cases" linked to her alleged role in inciting violence during protests. On the other hand, she said she and others were constantly urging people not to resort to violence during protests: "Don't they have the right to protest? Is this how India functions? The government is targeting people like us just to scuttle the people's movement and push large dams."

Vijay's campaign blitz begins, targets DMK & BJP

E T B SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

TVK chief Vijay waves at supporters during a rally in Tiruchirapalli on Saturday. PTI

Actor-politician Vijay on Saturday kicked off his much-awaited public connect programme in Tiruchirapalli by accusing the DMK and BJP of "cheating people" by not implementing promises they made during elections.

The Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK) chief took over five hours to reach his first campaign point from the Tiruchirapalli airport, as thousands of people converged in the city to catch a glimpse of their favourite hero.

Sitting inside a specially designed bus, Vijay was seen waving at the crowd. The traffic jams and the campaign turned into a nightmare for residents, with vehicles stranded on the highway connecting Chennai to Madurai.

After wading through a sea of supporters, Vijay finally stood atop the bus at 3 pm to tell his supporters why he chose Tiruchirapalli, which is considered a turning point city for parties like DMK and AIADMK. Vijay tore into the DMK, seeking to know how many promises made by the party before it came to power have been implemented.

"They allow you (women) to travel free on town buses and mock you, saying free...free... The DMK said they will reduce the price of Diesel. Did they?" he asked the crowd.

He didn't spare the BJP either by launching an all-round attack on the party on issues like Keeladi archaeological site, Katchatheevu, NEET, and denying funds to Tamil Nadu for not implementing the National Education Policy 2020.

SC verdict on stay of Waqf (Amendment) Act tomorrow

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Supreme Court is scheduled to pronounce its order on Monday on the issue of interim relief in a batch of pleas challenging the constitutional validity of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025.

A bench of Chief Justice of India B R Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih had reserved its order on May 22 on pleas to stay the provisions of the law.

According to the SC causelist, the CJI would pronounce the order on Monday, September 15, in the matter registered as 'In Re: Waqf Amendment Act, 2025'.

Cracks in grand alliance? RJD's Bihar march goes solo

ABHAY KUMAR
PATNA

Former Bihar deputy chief minister and current Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly, Tejashwi Yadav, is expected to embark on a statewide walkathon on September 16. However, there is a catch: Neither Rahul Gandhi nor any Congress leader will join the RJD leader during his march, called the "Bihar Adhikar Yatra".

Tejashwi Yadav

This may sound strange to all those who recently saw Rahul and Tejashwi jointly covering the fortnight-long "Voter Adhikar Yatra" from Sasaram to Patna. The yatra infused new life into the Congress and rejuvenated the Mahagathbandhan.

But Tejashwi will embark on the upcoming 1,500-km "Voter Adhikar Yatra" without any Congress leader.

So, is he really miffed with the Congress? While officially no leader worth his salt is admitting this publicly, those in the know in both the Congress and the RJD aver that Lalu's heir-apparent is upset with the Congress repeatedly avoiding naming Tejashwi as the Mahagathbandhan's chief-ministerial candidate.

RJD sources pointed to the Congress' Bihar in-charge Krishna Allavaru reiterating that Bihar's voters and elected MLAs would choose the next CM.

Congress leaders, however, argue that not naming a CM candidate is part of the party's strategy for three prime reasons.

"First, before naming Tejashwi as the CM face, the Congress would like to drive a hard bargain in the seat-sharing talks. Second, Tejashwi is facing several court cases. Naming him the CM nominee may send the wrong message," explained a senior Congress leader.

"The third is the caste factor. The OBCs and EBCs, whom Rahul is wooing, may not like a numerically-strong Yadav as the CM face," noted the leader, who was earlier the Bihar Pradesh Congress Committee chief.

EC affirms control over voter roll revisions in SC filing

Says direction for regular SIRs would infringe on its jurisdiction

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Election Commission has told the Supreme Court that it has on July 5, 2025, issued communications to the chief electoral officers of all states and Union Territories, except Bihar, to initiate preparatory steps for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, by fixing June 1, 2026, as the qualifying date for the nationwide exercise.

In an affidavit to a plea by advocate Ashwini K Upadhyay, the poll panel said the SIR fell within the jurisdiction to the exclusion of any other authority.

Upadhyay sought a direction for nationwide SIR before every election, to ensure the purity of the electoral rolls and that only Indian citizens decide the polity and policy of the country.

Responding to the court's notice on the PIL, the EC, in an affidavit, said, "Any direction to conduct a 'SIR' at regular intervals throughout the country would encroach upon its exclusive jurisdiction".

It maintained that it has the "complete discretion" over the policy of revision of the electoral rolls.

'Cognisant of responsibility'

It said the Election Commission is fully cognisant of its statutory responsibility to maintain the purity and integrity of the electoral rolls and, in exercise of its powers under the Representation of the People Act, 1950, has decided to conduct SIR in different states as envisaged in the SIR order of June 24, 2025.

Referring to the poll panel's July 5 letter, it said the EC had convened a conference of all CEOs of the states and Union Territories in New Delhi on September 10.

However, it also relied upon Section 21 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, which provided for the preparation and revision of the electoral roll and vests a discretion in the poll panel as regards the timing of the revisional exercise.

"It is apparent that the obligation to revise the electoral roll is not couched within a timeline, but is a general obligation which is to be met before each general or legislative assembly election, or before each by-election to fill a casual vacancy," it said.

The affidavit said Rule 25 of the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960, dealt with revision of rolls.

"On a bare perusal of Rule 25, it is further apparent that the decision to conduct a summary or an intensive revision of the electoral roll is left to the discretion of the Election Commission of India," it said.

'Vote chori' charge bereft of basis: BJP

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Criticising Congress leader Rahul Gandhi over the 'vote chori' allegations, the BJP said that the analysis of past election trends reveals that the claims made by the Congress leader were 'bereft of basis'.

BJP leader GVL Narasimha Rao has said that the findings are from an analysis of past election trends. "(These trends) reveal that Rahul Gandhi's claims are bereft of basis. The fact is that the Congress party has been on a declining trajectory from its best performance in Lok Sabha elections in 1984 when Rajiv Gandhi won a landslide victory with 49.1% popular vote share and a tally of 404 out of 543 seats," Rao said.

"After a slide in popular support over the next three decades, the Congress party's worst-ever performance was registered in 2014 when it won just 44 out of 543 seats with a vote share of 19.5%," he added.

Rao also said that since former prime minister and Janata Dal founder VP Singh defeated the Congress first in the 1989 Lok Sabha elections, should be he considered a vote thief. "Given his (VP Singh's) key role in bringing down the Congress party, does Rahul Gandhi consider VP Singh as 'Vote Chor Number 1'," he asked.

He further said that the current I.N.D.I.A bloc leaders defeated Congress in the past.

"The Samajwadi party, which uprooted the Congress party from Uttar Pradesh, is its staunch ally today, and Mayawati, who projected the Congress as anti-Dalit, became its ally in the 1996 assembly polls. Would Rahul Gandhi explain as to why his party chose to align with the Vote Chor parties in Uttar Pradesh and has not gathered the courage to fight on its own," Rao questioned.

He also said that by the same argument, the Congress should question the Trinamool Congress in West Bengal. "Would Rahul Gandhi gather the courage to call Marxist Jyoti Basu and Mamta Banerjee as 'Vote Chor' in the campaign for West Bengal elections scheduled to be held next year?"

Guj HC holds Yusuf Pathan guilty of land encroachment

SATISH JHA
AHMEDABAD, DHNS

Saying that granting leniency to celebrities for defying law would give a wrong message to society, the Gujarat High Court recently held that former cricketer and TMC MP Yusuf Pathan had encroached a residential plot in Vadodara and directed the civic authorities to clear it.

A bench of Justice Mauna Bhatt passed the order while rejecting Pathan's petition.

The land is located next to his bungalow in the Tandalja area. In 2012, he had approached the Vadodara Municipal Corporation (VMC) to allot the plot to him "considering the security of the petitioner and his family."

The civic body carried out a valuation and forwarded a proposal to the VMC commissioner to allot the plot to Pathan. The commissioner then referred it to the government. In 2014, the government rejected the proposal. However, he continued to retain possession of the plot.

The court said in 2014, when the government rejected the proposal to allow him to buy the plot, Pathan "had no right to occupy the plot in question, which is why the submission of the Corporation that the petitioner has encroached the land in question, is correct."

RESEARCH BOOST

10 government hospitals form network for clinical trials

KALYAN RAY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

With enhanced regulatory requirements for home-grown data, 10 government hospitals — including one from Bengaluru — have joined hands with support from a pharma major to create a network to conduct top-quality clinical trials in India.

India accounts for 17% of the global population and 20% of the disease burden, yet fewer than 4% of global clinical trials are conducted here. Owing to such gaps, Indian patients often wait a long time before new medicines approved in other countries are allowed for sale in the domestic market.

Six years ago, in a new set of clinical trial rules, the Centre permitted medicines approved in a few countries with high regulatory standards to be sold in India, provided phase-III / IV trials were conducted here.

The Central Drug Standards and Control Organisation preferred at least 50% of such trial data from government hospitals, sources told *DH*.

For all these years, a key bottleneck was the lack of training in smaller hospitals on how to conduct international-standard clinical trials, which Roche provided in line with the company's experience of running similar networks in other countries.

Though the hospitals received training from Roche, they have not been exclusive trial sites for the multinational giant and were free to conduct clinical trials for anyone. "None of the trials being conducted at my hospital are Roche products," said Ravikant Singh, officer-in-charge at Muzaffarpur's Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital.

Other hospitals in the chain are the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Rishikesh; Safdarjung Hospital, New Delhi; Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences, Rohtak; Balco Medical Centre, Raipur; Government Medical College, Aurangabad; Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health, Bengaluru; Dr Bhubaneswar Borooah Cancer Institute, Guwahati; Kalyan Singh Super Speciality Cancer Institute & Hospital, Lucknow; and Acharya Harihar Post Graduate Institute of Cancer, Cuttack.

Medical researchers from these hospitals and officials from the ICMR, NITI Aayog, and Roche met here on Saturday to review the progress made in the last two years to build the network.

Uddhav, AAP take up cudgels against India-Pakistan match

MUMBAI/NEW DELHI, DHNS: Political parties like the Shiv Sena (UBT) and the AAP on Saturday protested against the upcoming Asia Cup clash between India and Pakistan, with some even singling out Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Against the backdrop of the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack and the subsequent and "ongoing" Operation Sindoor, Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray slammed the BJP-led Central government for insulting national sentiments and mixing politics and business with patriotism.

Thackeray announced Shiv Sena (UBT) protests across Maharashtra on Sunday, when the party's women's wing would send vermillion boxes to Modi.

Slamming Modi, he said: "Our PM said blood and water cannot flow together. Then, how can blood and cricket flow together? How can war and cricket happen at the same time?"

AAP leader Saurabh Bharadwaj protests against the upcoming India-Pakistan cricket match, in New Delhi. PTI

He told reporters on Saturday: "Boycotting the match against Pakistan is an opportunity to convey to the world India's stand on terrorism. Playing the match is a joke on patriotism."

He added: "Should we be playing cricket with Pakistan when our soldiers are sacrificing their lives protecting the borders?"

Calling for cancellation of the match, he said: "This is a real test for Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, and his son (ICC chief) Jay Shah."

Meanwhile, the AAP on Saturday burnt an effigy in Delhi in a show of protest against the match. It put out a video on X (formerly Twitter) explaining its actions.

It also said it would "expose" the establishments in the city that broadcast the match on Sunday.

Pahalgam victim's wife slams BCCI

LUCKNOW, DHNS: The wife of one of the victims of the Pahalgam terror attack on Saturday slammed the BCCI over the proposed India-Pakistan cricket match in the ongoing Asia Cup 2025 scheduled to be held in the UAE on Sunday and urged the people to boycott it.

Ashanya Dwivedi, whose husband Shubham Dwivedi was among the 26 killed by terrorists in J&K's Pahalgam in April this year, said that the match amounted to "disrespect to the martyrs" of Pahalgam.

"It is like adding salt to the injuries of the families of the victims," Ashanya said.

"The people should boycott the match and should not watch it on TV...," she added.

Ashanya slammed the BCCI. "I think the BCCI is not sensitive and has no respect for those who lost their dear ones in Pahalgam," she said.

Bhupen Hazarika's music united India: PM

IMPHAL, DHNS: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said Assam's music maestro Bhupen Hazarika's music and songs united India and continued to give voice to the country's unity.

"Bhupen da created immortal compositions that connected India through their melodies and stirred generations of Indians. ...[H] is songs and voice continue to bear witness to India's development journey and energise it," Modi said at Hazarika's birth centenary celebrations at the College of Veterinary Science playground in Guwahati.

FRAGILE STABILITY Deep political mistrust threatens Kathmandu's democratic future

Gen Z agitation propels Nepal into uncharted constitutional terrain

RANJIT RAE

Following the fury and devastation unleashed by the Gen Z protesters on 8–9 September, which resulted in the loss of over 30 lives, including several youth killed in police firing, a semblance of order is returning to Nepal. President Ram Chandra Poudel has appointed former Chief Justice Mrs Sushila Karki as the Interim Prime Minister with the mandate to organise general elections by 5 March 2026. The ground situation, too, is gradually improving. Kathmandu airport has reopened, the police are returning to their duties, and normal life is resuming.

Justice Sushila Karki's appointment is not without controversy. Although she was the nominee of the Gen Z protesters, under the Constitution of Nepal (2015), an individual who is not a member of the Lower House of Parliament cannot be appointed Prime Minister. However, there was wide political agreement on her candidature, including from the largest parties represented in Parliament.

The dissolution of the Parliament thereafter has also been controversial. Gen Z protesters insisted on this, arguing that Parliament housed discredited and corrupt politicians who would obstruct the work of the new Government. Political parties, however, were apprehensive that dissolution could pave the way towards revoking the Constitution. They had hoped for some via media whereby Parliament would not function but continue to exist in a form of suspended animation to deal with any contingencies that might arise. For instance, what would happen if elections are not held within the prescribed time frame? The tenure of the Interim Government would then need to be extended, allowing it to function without parliamentary accountability for an indefinite period.

The President was initially opposed to dissolution but finally agreed, reportedly under pressure from protesters as well as Mrs Karki and the Army Chief. Such a situation is not new to Nepal. In 2013, Chief Justice Khil Raj Regmi was appointed Head of an Interim Council of Ministers in the absence of a functioning Parliament, on the basis of an all-party consensus, with the specific mandate to organise Constituent Assembly elections. This decision was validated in a majority judgement by the Supreme Court under the 'doctrine of necessity'. Ironically, at that time Justice Sushila Karki had delivered a dissenting opinion.

While the anxiety of political parties to safeguard the gains of the 2015 Constitution — which transformed Nepal into a secular, federal, inclusive, and democratic Republic — is understandable, these fears may be somewhat exaggerated. The President, the only elected office under the Constitution, continues to function, and Karki herself has an unblemished record of upholding the rule of law. Furthermore, she has been appointed under Part 6, Article 61(4) of the Constitution, which stipulates that the President's main duty is to abide by and protect the Constitution. Nevertheless, citizens of Nepal will need to remain vigilant.

Serious challenges lie ahead for the Interim government. First, law and order must be restored. Second, it must begin functioning swiftly — a daunting task given that virtually all structures of democracy, including Parliament, the Supreme Court, Rashtrapati Bhawan, the Secretariat, regional offices, government vehicles, and court records, have been burnt down. Third, it is expected to address corruption in public life. Fourth, a Constitution Review Commission may be established. Finally, and most importantly, general elections must be organised within six months — no small task in the circumstances under which the interim government has assumed office.

Nepal's interim Prime Minister Sushila Karki arrives to meet victims of the deadly anti-corruption protests at a trauma center at Tudikhel, in Kathmandu, on Saturday. PTI

Karki requires all possible support — domestically, from citizens as well as political parties that still retain public backing despite their discredited leaders. Some mechanism for periodic consultation between the interim government and parties may prove useful. Ideally, tainted leaders who have been fully exposed during the recent upheavals will resign from party positions. The government also requires international support, particularly from its closest neighbour, India. India swiftly welcomed the new government hours after it was sworn in and reiterated its commitment to work closely with Nepal. India should respond generously to requests for assistance, especially in reconstruction and the organisation of elections.

Our region has witnessed the power of youth and the mobilisation potential of social media to effect major political transformations — through street protests in Sri Lanka, in Bangladesh, and now in Nepal. Neighbourhood diplomacy must therefore focus on youth aspirations and on strengthening outreach and connectivity with this generation. Creative programmes for young people and smart use of social media should form a core part of this approach.

Indian audio-visual media also exerts huge influence in Nepal. A more informed debate, discussion and presentation of neighbourhood issues — rather than speculative reporting — is needed. During the Nepal earthquake, the hashtag #GoBackIndianMedia trended widely. Even during the recent crisis, some Indian reportage provoked anger. Introducing proper briefing systems for media would encourage a more nuanced understanding of issues. Although the present government is an interim one, India's interests in Nepal are long-term. We should continue to advance connectivity initiatives and cooperation in hydropower. A stable, peaceful, and prosperous Nepal is vital for India's security. India has always supported the aspirations and will of the people of Nepal for a democratic and prosperous future — and must continue to do so.

(The writer is a former Indian Ambassador to Nepal and author of 'Kathmandu Dilemma: Resetting the India–Nepal Relationship)

WORLD AT A GLANCE

An aboriginal dancer performs during an anti-racism protest march in Melbourne, Australia, on Saturday. AFP

12 soldiers, 35 militants killed in Pakistan Army operations

▸ The Pakistan army said at least 12 soldiers and 35 militants allegedly belonging to the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) were killed in two separate operations in the north-western Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, PTI reports from Peshawar.

The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the military's media wing, said on Saturday that the operations were conducted over the past four days. An intelligence-based operation was carried out by security forces in Bajaur district, during which 22 TTP militants were killed in an intense exchange of fire, it said. In another encounter in South Waziristan district, 13 TTP militants were killed and 12 soldiers lost their lives in heavy fighting, according to the ISPR. Weapons and ammunition were recovered from the militants, the statement said. The ISPR also claimed the involvement of Afghan nationals in the attacks.

Taliban, US discuss normalising ties

▸ The Taliban said on Saturday it discussed normalising relations between Afghanistan and the United States in a meeting with Trump administration officials, AP/PTI reports from Kabul.

The White House did not issue a statement describing the meeting or immediately respond to a request for comment. The Taliban statement said its foreign minister, Amir Khan Muttaqi, met with Trump's special envoy for hostage response, Adam Boehler, and its special envoy for Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalilzad. The Taliban released photographs from their talks. "Comprehensive discussions were held on ways to develop bilateral relations between the two countries, issues related to citizens, and investment opportunities in Afghanistan," the statement said. It did not say where or precisely when the meeting was held. The statement added that the US delegation also expressed condolences over the devastating earthquake in Afghanistan. The meeting came after the Taliban released US citizen George Glezmann, who was abducted while traveling as a tourist. He was the third detainee freed by the Taliban since President Donald Trump took office.

People hold a banner during the second day of protests organised by the Bloquons Tout (Let's Block Everything) movement in Nantes, France, on Saturday. REUTERS

Poland scrambles jets, shuts airport

▸ Polish and allied aircraft were deployed in a "preventive" operation in Poland's airspace on Saturday because of a threat of drone strikes in neighbouring areas of Ukraine, and the airport in the eastern Polish city of Lublin was closed, AP/PTI reports from Warsaw (Poland).

The alert came after multiple Russian drones crossed into Poland on Wednesday, prompting NATO to send fighter jets to shoot them down and underlining long-held concerns about the expansion of Russia's more than three-year war in Ukraine. The Polish military's operational command posted on X on Saturday afternoon that ground-based air defence and reconnaissance systems were on high alert. It stressed that "these actions are preventive in nature," and were aimed at securing Poland's airspace and protecting the country's citizens. It cited a threat of drone strikes in regions of Ukraine bordering Poland, but didn't immediately give further details. Prime Minister Donald Tusk also posted that "preventive air operations" had begun in Polish airspace because of the threat posed by Russian drones operating over nearby areas of Ukraine. The Polish Air Navigation Services Agency said that Lublin Airport was closed to air traffic "due to military aviation activities."

Violence flares at London anti-immigrant march

Police caught off guard as Tommy Robinson rally surges

LONDON, REUTERS

More than 100,000 protesters marched through central London on Saturday, carrying English and British flags and clashing with police in one of the UK's biggest right-wing rallies in recent times.

London's Metropolitan Police said the "Unite the Kingdom" march, organised by anti-immigrant activist Tommy Robinson, drew around 110,000 people. Officers kept them apart from a "Stand Up to Racism" counter protest attended by about 5,000. Police appeared surprised by the size of the turnout, describing the rally as "too big to fit into Whitehall", a government-lined street on the approved route of the march.

Police officers confront anti-immigration activists during a rally in London on Saturday. REUTERS

Officers trying to prevent protesters veering off the route faced "unacceptable violence", the force said, reporting kicks, punches, and bottles, flares and other projectiles being thrown.

Nine arrests had been made and "many more" were expected, police added. The march capped a tense summer in Britain that has seen repeated protests outside hotels housing migrants.

Demonstrators carried the Union Flag and the red-and-white St George's Cross, while some waved American and Israeli flags and wore the MAGA hats of US President Donald Trump. They chanted slogans against Prime Minister Keir Starmer and held placards including some reading "send them home". Some attendees brought children.

"Today is the spark of a cultural revolution in Great Britain, this is our moment," Robinson declared in an address to supporters.

Waves of fake threat calls flood US colleges

MISSION (US), AP/PTI: Around 50 college campuses across the US have been deluged in recent weeks with hoax calls about armed gunmen and other violence, laying bare the challenges of detecting fake threats quickly to prevent mass panic.

Students at some schools spent hours hiding under desks, only to find out later it was someone's idea of entertainment. On Thursday, several historically Black colleges locked down or cancelled classes after receiving threats, at a time when the fatal shooting of conservative activist Charlie Kirk at a Utah college had campuses newly on edge. In other cases, schools figured out early that something was amiss, but even then it took time and resources. The FBI is investigating, but so far there have been no arrests.

Dispatch call centres often are the last lines of defence to swatters, a burden in an era of mass shootings, including one this week at a suburban Denver high school and another two weeks ago at a Catholic church in Minneapolis that killed two people.

Israeli airstrikes kill 32 people in Gaza City

DEIR AL-BALAH, AP/PTI

A barrage of airstrikes killed at least 32 people across Gaza City as Israel ramped up its offensive and urged Palestinians to evacuate, medical staff reported on Saturday.

The dead included 12 children, according to the morgue at Shifa Hospital, where the bodies were brought.

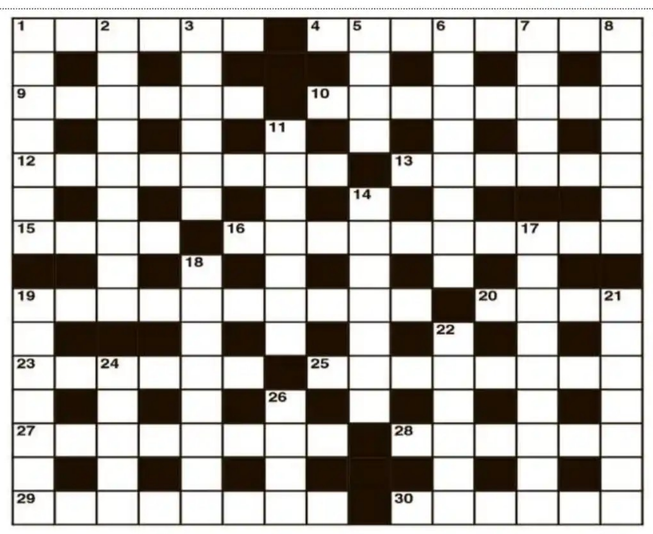
Israel has in recent days intensified strikes across Gaza City, destroying multiple high-rise buildings and accusing Hamas of installing surveillance equipment in them. It has ordered residents to leave as part of an offensive aimed at taking control of the largest Palestinian city, which it says is Hamas' last stronghold. Hundreds of thousands of people remain, struggling with famine conditions.

One of the strikes overnight and into early Saturday hit a house in the Sheikh Radwan neighbourhood, killing a family of 10, including a mother and her three children, health officials said. Images showed strikes followed by plumes of smoke rising into the sky.

Israel's army did not immediately respond to questions on the latest strikes. In the wake of escalating hostilities and evacuation calls, the number of people leaving has spiked in recent weeks, according to aid workers. However, many families remain stuck because of the high cost of transport and housing, while others, having been displaced multiple times, are reluctant to move again, fearing nowhere in the enclave is safe.

In a message on social media Saturday, Israel's army told the remaining Palestinians in Gaza City to leave "immediately" and move south to what it's calling a humanitarian zone. Army spokesman Avichay Adraee said that more than a quarter of a million people had left Gaza City — from an estimated 1 million who live in the area of north Gaza around the city.

◆ SUNDAY CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 2645 ◆



ACROSS
1 Miscellaneous goods (3,3)
4 The advantage (4,4)
9 Maker of knives (6)
10 Persuasive flattery (4,4)
12 Make-believe (8)
13 To bargain wranglingly (6)
15 City featured in Homer's Iliad (4)
16 Likely to happen (2,3,5)
19 Having inscrutable expression (5-5)
20 Fit of petty annoyance (4)
23 Ship's kitchen (6)
25 Be out of one's depth (8)
27 People of no importance (5,3)
28 Suffer extreme hunger (6)
29 Supporting framework (8)
30 Absolute truth (6)

DOWN
1 Large accumulated prize (7)
2 Strictly according to rules (2,3,4)
3 Dish made with eggs (6)
5 Owl's cry (4)
6 Paltry wage (8)
7 Surrounded by (5)
8 Make dejected (7)
11 Malicious gossip (7)
14 Coax by endearments (7)
17 Journey there and back (5,4)
18 Extremely loyal (4-4)
19 Mythical winged horse (7)
21 In earnest (3,4)
22 Arranged with precise neatness (4,2)
24 Permission (5)
26 Group of three (4)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 4005

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 8, Heal-thy 9, For my part 13, L-earn 14, Blast 15, Scratch 16, Go-sling 17, Lo-O-se 18, Table 20, Thing 22, Pie-r-ce 23, Haunts 25, Go-ndola 27, Ripping 30, Trip-od 31, Broach 32, Muses 35, Meets 36, Ex-act 37, F-idd-led 39, Tan-gles 41, Ex-it's 42, Grant 43, F-urn-ished 44, Re-moved.
DOWN: 1, Relays 2, Slanting 3, The Big Apple 4, Soft touch 5, Smasher 6, Spirit lamp 7, T-ro-t 10, S-L-ight 11, T-allied 12, Cheers 19, Bananas 21, I-dolis-e 24, Tight-fisted 26, Drops a line 28, Break even 29, Wag-tail 30, To-ma-to 32, Made good 33, S-E-date 34, Pe-rsi-st 38, Leaves 40, Nous.

EASY
ACROSS: 8, Mediums 9, Sideboard 13, Hoist 14, Ennui 15, Outlast 16, Legless 17, Usage 18, Giant 20, Yacht 22, Nestle 23, Morose 25, Compute 27, Corsair 30, Coupon 31, Serene 32, Ether 35, Lotto 36, Otter 37, Theatre 39, Elastic 41, Relic 42, Horse 43, Insolvent 44, Stencil.
DOWN: 1, Seeing 2, Ointment 3, Impersonate 4, Similarly 5, Recover 6, Contagious 7, Aria 10, Chilly 11, Anguish 12, Statue 19, Abolish 21, Croquet 24, Domesticate 26, Proportion 28, Festering 29, Merrily 30, Caller 32, Elephant 33, Reeled 34, Concave 38, Torrid 40, Anne.

SU DO KU X - 3676

		4		9	6			
							1	
	9	7			8	3		
4			5					1
8		9						
	6		9					3
	5							
	2			1	5			

SOLUTION TO 3675

8	3	6	5	9	2	4	7	1
2	7	5	1	8	4	6	3	9
9	1	4	3	7	6	5	2	8
3	6	9	2	5	8	1	4	7
1	2	8	4	6	7	9	5	3
4	5	7	9	3	1	8	6	2
6	9	2	7	1	5	3	8	4
5	4	1	8	2	3	7	9	6
7	8	3	6	4	9	2	1	5

To solve the puzzle:
The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

ATHLETICS Technique faces off against raw power as India-Pakistan rivalry reignites in javelin at the Worlds

It's Neeraj precision vs Arshad power

ADITYA K HALDER
BENGALURU, DHNS

The ongoing Asia Cup cricket tournament in the UAE is the biggest sporting spectacle at the moment as far as the subcontinent is concerned. With all due respect to all participants, the multi-nation tournament is essentially about the India-Pakistan rivalry. The much-awaited game in the Middle East, however, may not augur well in terms of quality as the scale is tilting heavily in favour of the Men in Blue. Instead, another Indo-Pak duel promises a nail-biter with higher stakes at play somewhere else on the same continent.

That's because reigning World Champion Neeraj Chopra is putting his title on the line next Sunday in an expected 12-man showdown with Pakistan's reigning Olympic Champion Arshad Nadeem, laying one of the sizeable claims to strip the Indian off it at the World Championships in Tokyo.

One may argue that 28-year-old Arshad barely stands a chance against Neeraj (27) this season as the Panipat-born athlete has finally breached the 90m-mark this year for a new personal best of 90.23m. Arshad, on the other hand, had his struggles with injury and only competed at the Asian Athletics Championships in Korea last May for his season best of 86.40 (gold medal).

The Mian Channu-born javelin thrower, however, has a knack for showing up at the big-ticket events as he did last year when he hurled the javelin past 90m twice in Paris to set the new Olympic and Asian record at 92.97. The astonishing attempt came just a month after Arshad had managed a season best of 84.21 at the Paris Diamond League.

The 8-metre improvement was unheard of for those who were engrossed in Neeraj's career, which saw the javelin superstar take four years to move from 88.07m to his current personal best. While each javelin thrower is unique in its own way, the immense difference in the graph of Neeraj and Arshad's growth points to the two different styles of throwing. From runway to release, even a layman can immediately spot how different the Indo-Pak rivals are with their approach but the experts reveal a whole new perspective.

"There are different traits to different javelin throwers. Neeraj is a great technical thrower while Arshad is a great power thrower," decorated US throws coach Steve Lemke tells *DH*. "Technical throwers probably have slower and steadier improvements, and power throwers can make big jumps and improvements.

"Arshad actually has a very simple and effective technique. He is a big guy and is very simple and consistent with his technique when he is healthy," added the Reliance coach, who has over three decades of coaching experience in the US.

On the contrary, those who have followed the career of Neeraj in the pre-Tokyo 2020 era are well aware of how much emphasis the Haryana man puts on his technique. A crucial example came in 2019, when Neeraj requested a change of coach as he wanted to switch to the Athletic Federation of India's (AFI) junior foreign throws coach Bartonietz Klaus from head coach Uwe Hohn.

The request stunned many, as Hohn is a respected name in the javelin world; he's the only person to go past the 100m mark (104.80) before the javelins were redesigned in 1986. However, what appealed to Neeraj about Bartonietz was the German's immense knowledge of biomechanics. The combination, of course, went on to win every major title that was on offer for a javelin thrower.

Arshad, on the other hand, has spent most of his coaching years with his domestic coach Salman Iqbal Butt and had a few months' stint with Terseus Liebenberg in Potchefstroom. And despite contrasting styles of throwing, coaching is pivotal to both.

"Power throwers are natural throwers, who are already throwing a good distance without much technique involved," said Canada's throws coach Rachel Andres. "They make a coach's job tougher as you want to maximise the impact. The concern is not to lose out on too much power in correcting the technique.

"Technical throwers are more textbook and like to follow their coach's instructions to perfection to get the maximum. From their run-up to the release, everything is in the flow, like we see with Neeraj," added Rachel, who is an NCCP performance coach in Canada.

That leads to the question of which method is the more effective one. Power throwers certainly seem to be at an advantage on a given day, but in the long run, technical ones seem to excel.

> "Power throwers are natural throwers, who are already throwing a good distance without much technique involved.
>
> **RACHEL ANDRES**
> Throw coach

Looking deeper into the Neeraj-Arshad rivalry, the familiarity between the duo is much older than it appears, as they have faced off since their U-20 days, beginning with the South Asian Games in Guwahati in 2016. However, it never really existed as Neeraj finished ahead — and by a margin — for all of it until 2022. The Birmingham Commonwealth Games success for Arshad was the turning point, despite no face-off with an unfit Neeraj as a maiden 90m show put him in the big leagues. The rivalry only got bigger from there on as Arshad eventually eclipsed his Indian counterpart at the Paris Olympics after a close encounter at the 2023 Worlds.

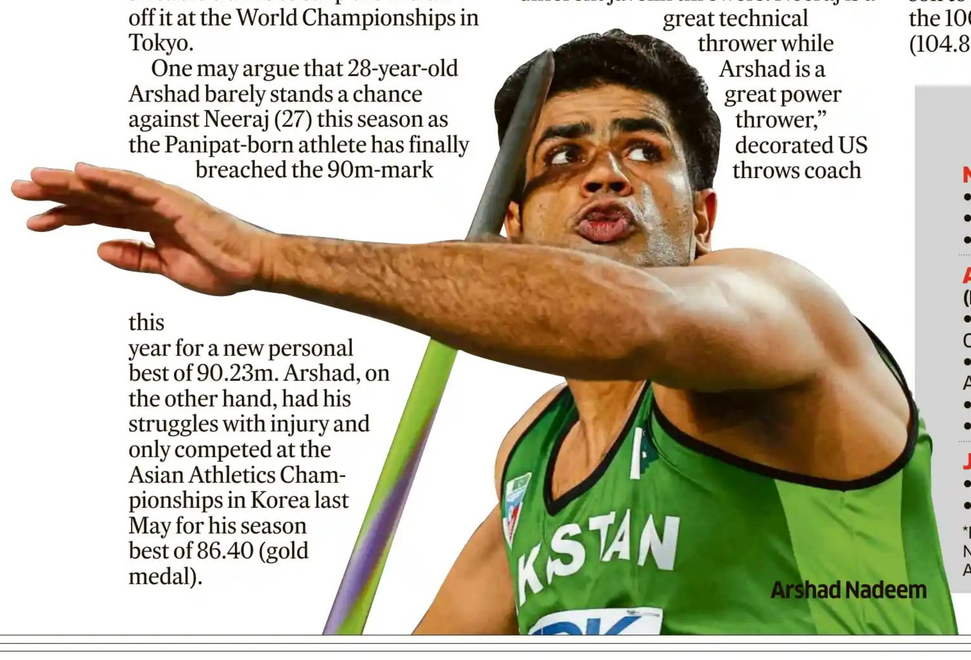
Interestingly, Neeraj competed in 25 events since 2022, finishing among the top two in each of them with unparalleled consistency, while Arshad showed up at eight events during the same time frame, with focus largely on the big-ticket tournaments. For the Pakistani, funding understandably has been an issue, given the financial condition of the state, impacting other Olympic sports as well.

From that perspective, Germans and other European throwers, on the other hand, have the habit of competing in up to 10 events in a season, including the likes of Julian Weber, Johaness Vetter, Thomas Rohler, Anderson Peters (all power throwers) among others but none have matched the consistency of Neeraj.

Coach Rachel gave her keen insight on why Neeraj's streak is unique while drawing comparisons with Vetter's short-lived career, marred with injuries after a breakthrough 2020-21 season, which saw him throw as big as 97.76 and 96.29.

"Technical throwers are likely to have a longer career as their approach will not overburden their body," said Rachel, who had a storied career as a student athlete in the US. "The same may not be the case for the power throwers as they put too much stress on their body, as was the case with Vetter back in 2022. For them, recovery days are as crucial as their training days."

But does that make Neeraj a favourite to defend his title for the upcoming finale? Not on Weber's watch at least, as the German has set the current world-leading attempt at 91.51, making the javelin final a likely three-way shootout for gold. One must not make the mistake of writing off Neeraj, especially with javelin great and coach Jan Zelezny by his side this time.



Arshad Nadeem

Neeraj Chopra

Eyes on prize

NEERAJ CHOPRA (IND)
- Reigning World Champion
- PB & SB: 90.23m (NR)
- Events won in 2025: 4 out of 7

ARSHAD NADEEM (PAK)
- Reigning Olympic Champion
- PB: 92.97m (In 2024 OR, AR, NR)
- SB: 86.40
- Events won in 2025: 1 out of 1

JULIAN WEBER (GER)
- PB & SB: 91.51m (world leading
- Events won in 2025: 9 out of 10

*PB: Personal Best, SB: Season Best, NR: National Record, OR: Olympic record, AR: Asia Record

Fela shines as BDUFC pip FCRB

BENGALURU, DHNS: In a closely-fought contest, K Lal Rin Fela's brace helped Bangalore Dream United FC score a narrow 3-2 win over FC Real Bengaluru in the KSFA Super Division League Championship at the Bangalore Football Stadium here on Saturday.

LOCAL FOOTBALL

First it was Vaishak A (22nd) who put FCRB in the lead before Lakshmikant Bellur Srinivas' first-half injury time goal (45+2nd) saw BDUFC equalise. It was Fela who successfully converted two opportunities within nine minutes (59th, 68th) in the second-half to put his team ahead.

FCRB stayed relentless in playing catch-up and were rewarded through Syed Ahmed's 90th+7-minute goal but it proved to be a case of too little too late in the end.

Results: Kickstart FC: 0 drew with United Stars FC: 0; Bangalore City FC: 2 (Oka Zhimoni 5th, RS JIcis 62nd) bt Parikrma FC: 1 (ThangJalen Haokip 90th+2nd); Bangalore Dream United FC: 3 (Lakshmikant Bellur Srinivas 45+2nd, K Lal Rin Fela 59th, 68th) bt FC Real Bengaluru: 2 (Vaishak A 22nd, Syed Ahmed 90th+7).

Nirmal wins BRDCA Open Rapid Chess

BENGALURU, DHNS: Tamil Nadu's Nirmal L clinched the top honours in the 57th BRDCA Open Category Rapid Chess Tournament here on Saturday.

Nirmal, with an ELO rating of 1815, scored 6.5 points to finish first ahead of Karnataka's Digvijay Sunil (ELO 1852) who took home the runners-up trophy by accumulating six points.

Results (Top 3): Open Category: Nirmal L (6.5 points), 1; Digvijay Sunil (6 points), 2; Sinthia Sarkar (6 points), 3. **Boys: U-16:** Varchas (5.5 points), 1; Naman Rao P (5 points), 2; Arjun Roy (4 points), 3. **U-12:** Saksham Pandey (6 points), 1; Divyansh Deb (5.5 points), 2; Rohan Mathew Arun (5.5 points), 3. **U-9:** Nimalan Dharanipathy (7 points), 1; Kavin Arunkumar (6 points), 2; Gyan Satish Sheregar (5.5 points), 3. **U-7:** Adam Hazarika (6 points), 1; Gurudhayal (5.5 points), 2; Aekalavya Chauhan (5.5 points), 3. **Girls:U-16:** Shree AS (4.5 points), 1; Sanjana Subramanian (4 points), 2; Lasyasree Mattam (4 points), 3. **U-12:** Anvitha Kunchum Anand (5.5 points), 1; Soukhya KR (5.5 points), 2; Aarohi Kulkarni (5 points), 3. **U-9:** Dhanshika Dharanipathy (5.5 points), 1; Shruthika Satish Sheregar (4.5 points), 2; SB Ameena Umayraa Ameen (4.5 points), 3. **U-7:** Dhvija Anand (7 points), 1; Saanvi Santosh Angadi (4.5 points), 2; Sharme V M (4.5 points), 3.

ATHLETICS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Crouser's historic treble

Kenya's Chebet wins women's 10,000m, Lyles & Thompson reach 100m semifinal

TOKYO, AFP

Ryan Crouser made light of having missed most of the season through injury to become only the second man to win three successive world outdoor shot put titles on the opening day of the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo on Saturday.

Crouser won with a mark of 22.34 metres, Mexican Uziel Munoz took a surprise silver medal on his last throw in a national record of 21.97m, pushing Italy's European champion Leonardo Fabbri to the bronze position just three centimetres behind.

Crouser, the 32-year-old American world record holder and triple Olympic champion, emulates Werner Guenthoer of Switzerland, who achieved that feat in 1987, 1991 and 1993. It was an engrossing contest from start to finish.

Meanwhile, Kenya's Beatrice Chebet won the women's 10,000 metres title in a first step towards her tilt at a rarely-achieved distance double. Chebet, the world record holder in both the 5,000m and 10,000m, clocked a winning time of 30min 37.61sec for the first track gold of the championships in Tokyo.

Italy's Nadia Battocletti claimed silver in a national record of 30:38.23, while Ethiopia's defending champion Gudaf Tsegay took bronze in 30:39.65.

USA's Ryan Crouser in action during his victory at the men's shot put final of the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo on Saturday.

Dunfee wins 1st gold

Canada's Evan Dunfee and Spain's Maria Perez claimed the opening golds on offer at the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo with respective victories in the men's and women's 35km race walking events early morning.

Dunfee, 34, clocked 2hr 28min 22sec around the streets of the Japanese capital in sultry conditions to outpace Brazil's Caio Bonfim. Japan's Hayato Katsuki rounded out the podium to the delight of the morning crowd at the National Stadium, which was deprived of fans during the Covid-delayed Olympics in 2021.

Meanwhile, Perez defended her 35km race walk title for a third world gold overall. The 29-year-old racewalker, who won double gold in Budapest in 2023 over 20km and 35km, timed 2:39.01 for victory. Italy's Antonella Palmisano claimed silver, with Paula Milena Torres of Ecuador taking bronze.

Lyles cruises in heats

100m defending champion Noah Lyles, Jamaican rival Kishane Thompson and Botswanan Letsile Tebogo all coasted through their heats to advance to the semi-finals. The semifinals and final of the blue riband event in the Japanese capital is scheduled on Sunday.

Under pressure from Jamaica's fast-starting Ackeem Blake, Lyles eventually powered through for the heat win in 9.95 seconds, Blake taking second in 10.07.

Thompson, who went sixth in the all-time list after running a world-leading 9.75 seconds this season and edged Lyles in the Silesia Diamond League, looked in impressive form as he won his heat, also in 9.95. Tebogo had the slowest heat of all, winning with ease in 10.07 ahead of Canadian veteran Andre De Grasse.

Indian race walkers disappoint

TOKYO, PTI

Indian race walkers disappointed in the 35km events with Sandeep Kumar and Priyanka Goswami **(in pic)** finishing at 23rd and 24th places in the men's and women's sections respectively on the opening day of competitions at the World Athletics Championships here on Saturday.

Another Indian in the fray in the men's 35km race walk event, Ram Baboo was disqualified (DQ under rule TR54.7.5) after receiving his fourth red card. He had crossed 24km by then. Baboo, who had finished 27th in Budapest World Championships two years ago, is the current national record holder with a time of 2 hour 29 minute and 56 seconds.

He was one of the six walkers disqualified for the same infringement after 50 athletes began the early morning race.

The 39-year-old Sandeep, who had qualified for the showpiece at the last minute, clocked 2 hours 39 minutes and 15 seconds to finish the race at 23rd. He could not breach his personal and season's best of 2:35:06 under hot and humid conditions.

National record holder Priyanka clocked 3 hours 05 minutes 58 seconds to finish 24th in the 46-woman field.

The 29-year-old had to remain inside the penalty box for three and a half minutes after receiving her third red card, but could finish the race. Her national record stands at 2 hours 56 minutes 34 seconds.

In the women's 1500m race, Pooja finished a disappointing 11th in heat number two, clocking 4 minute 13.75 seconds, in a 14-athlete field.

Indian wrestlers falter on Day 1

ZAGREB (CROATIA), PTI: Indian wrestlers endured a disappointing start to their campaign at the World Championships with all four grapplers bowing out on the opening day of competition, here Saturday.

In the men's 61kg freestyle, Udit lost tamely to Taiyrbek Uulu of Kyrgyzstan, failing to open his account in a 0-2 defeat.

Competing in the 70kg division, Rohit went down narrowly 4-5 to Begijon Kuldashev of Uzbekistan despite putting up a spirited show.

His hopes of a repechage entry ended after the Uzbek wrestler crashed out in the next round.

In 86kg, Mukul Dahiya was outclassed 0-10 by American star Zahid Valencia, who advanced to the quarterfinals.

BFC reinstate player pay

Bengaluru FC on Saturday announced that it has reinstated the salaries of their first-team players and staff, reversing the club's decision taken last month in the wake of the uncertainty over the future of the Indian Super League (ISL).

On August 5, the Bengaluru-based side had indefinitely suspended the salaries of its first-team players and staff after ISL organisers FSDL kept the top-tier league "on hold" due to uncertainty surrounding the renewal of Master Rights Agreement (MRA) it signed with the All India Football Federation in 2010.

Abishek brace powers RWFSA

BENGALURU, DHNS: Abishek scored a brace as RWFSA trounced as Karnataka Forest Department 6-1 in the DS Murthy memorial hockey tournament here on Saturday.

Results: Delhi Public School Hockey Club: 5 (Shahanul Shafaz 1st, Saurabh Mahesh 9th, Devavrat Hiray 12th, 23rd, Muthu 56th) bt Dharwad District Hockey Association: 2 (Subhan Chaparband 34th, Prajwal B 44th); RWFSA: 6 (Kushman Singh 12th, Dhanush 24th, Abishek 45th, 55th, Mokshith 57th, Umesh 59th) bt Karnataka Forest Department: 1 (Mithun Bijwad 7th).

ON TV

CRICKET
Asia Cup: India vs Pakistan (8 pm). **LIVE** on **Sony Ten 1**.
1st WODI: India vs Australia (1:30 pm). **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network, JioHotstar.**
3rd T20I: England vs South Africa (7 pm). **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network.**

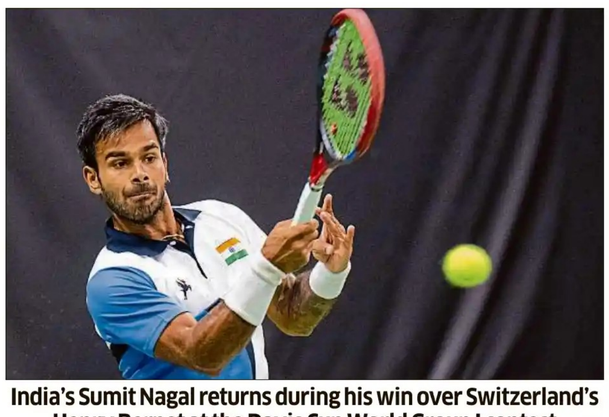
ATHLETICS
World Championships: Day 2 (4:30 am). **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network, JioHotstar.**

FOOTBALL
EPL: Burnley vs Liverpool (6:30 pm), Man City vs Man United (9 pm). **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network.**

HOCKEY
Women's Asia Cup Final: China vs India (5:30 pm). **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network.**

BADMINTON
Hong Kong Open: Finals (1:10 pm). **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network, JioHotstar.**

Nagal seals India's historic ticket to Davis Cup Qualifiers



India's Sumit Nagal returns during his win over Switzerland's Henry Bernet at the Davis Cup World Group I contest in Biel on Saturday. AP/PTI

BIEL (SWITZERLAND), PTI

India progressed to the Davis Cup Qualifiers for the first time ever after Sumit Nagal tamed aggressive teenager Henry Bernet in the first reverse singles to script the team's 3-1 win over Switzerland in the World Group I tie, here on Saturday.

Nagal took the court after N Sriram Balaji and Rithvik Bollipalli lost a tight doubles rubber 7-6 (3), 4-6, 5-7 to Jakub Paul and Dominic Stricker in two hours and 26 minutes.

Nagal was supposed to take on Jerome Kym in the fourth rubber but the Swiss team fielded reigning junior Australian Open champion Bernet for their do-or-die clash, which the Indian won 6-1, 6-3.

India had started the day with 2-0 advantage following Friday's inspiring singles wins by Nagal and debutant Dhakshineshwar Suresh.

This is India's first win over a European side in an away tie in 32 years after they had beaten France in the quarterfinals way back in 1993, when Leander Paes and Ramesh Krishnan led the team to a rare win.

India beat Denmark, though, at home on grass court in 2022 in Delhi. The first round of the Davis Cup Qualifiers will be held in January 2026.

Bernet's aggressive tactics meant that he ended up with a high number of unforced errors that helped the Indian.

"It means a lot. It's been a while that we won in Europe," said Nagal.

Nagal was playing his first Davis Cup tie since competing against Morocco in September 2023, and his presence made a difference.

Germany, Arg into finals

Raphael Collignon stunned world No. 8 Alex De Minaur on Saturday for the biggest win of his career as Belgium took a 2-0 lead over Australia in their Davis Cup second round qualifier.

Germany and Argentina became the first two teams to qualify this weekend to join defending champions Italy in the eight-team final in Bologna in November.

Germany beat Japan 4-0 in Tokyo with Argentina taking an unassailable 3-0 lead against the Netherlands in Groningen.

ASIA CUP : Defending champions India take on arch-rivals Pakistan today amid external noise

The most eagerly awaited showdown

R KAUSHIK
DUBAI

Lop-sided or not, hyped up or otherwise, this is a rivalry that excites. Maybe not as much as it once used to, when the balance of power was equally divided, but given the history that unites and divides the two nations, India vs Pakistan will perennially remain a marquee contest.

The desert sands of Sharjah have been mute witnesses to numerous compelling battles between the sides, starting with the inaugural Asia Cup in 1984. Packed houses, throbbing and thrumming with energy and electricity, were de rigueur, matches were decided by the smallest of margins including, most (in)famously, Javed Miandad's last-ball six off Chetan Sharma in 1986.

Rivalry is perhaps a misnomer if the recent past is anything to go by. India have gotten on the bike and raced away, forcing Pakistan to play catch-up. The 2009 T20 World Cup champions have taken their time reacting. It's only in the last few months that they have woken up to the necessity of drastically altering their approach to the 20-over game, following the arrival of New Zealand Mike Hesson as their head coach.

In any multinational cricketing spectacle, India vs Pakistan is easily the most eagerly awaited showdown. It's no different this time, though Sunday's T20 Asia Cup faceoff hasn't generated the same interest or buzz of yore.

It's the first time the sides are coming face to face since April 22 and the Pahalgam tragedy. Various quarters have castigated the Board of Control for Cricket in India and Suryakumar Yadav's men for not boycotting the Pakistan game. It's worth remembering that the BCCI and its employees are guided by the Indian government's sports policy, which has greenlit playing Pakistan in continental and global competitions across disciplines while slapping a ban on bilateral action.

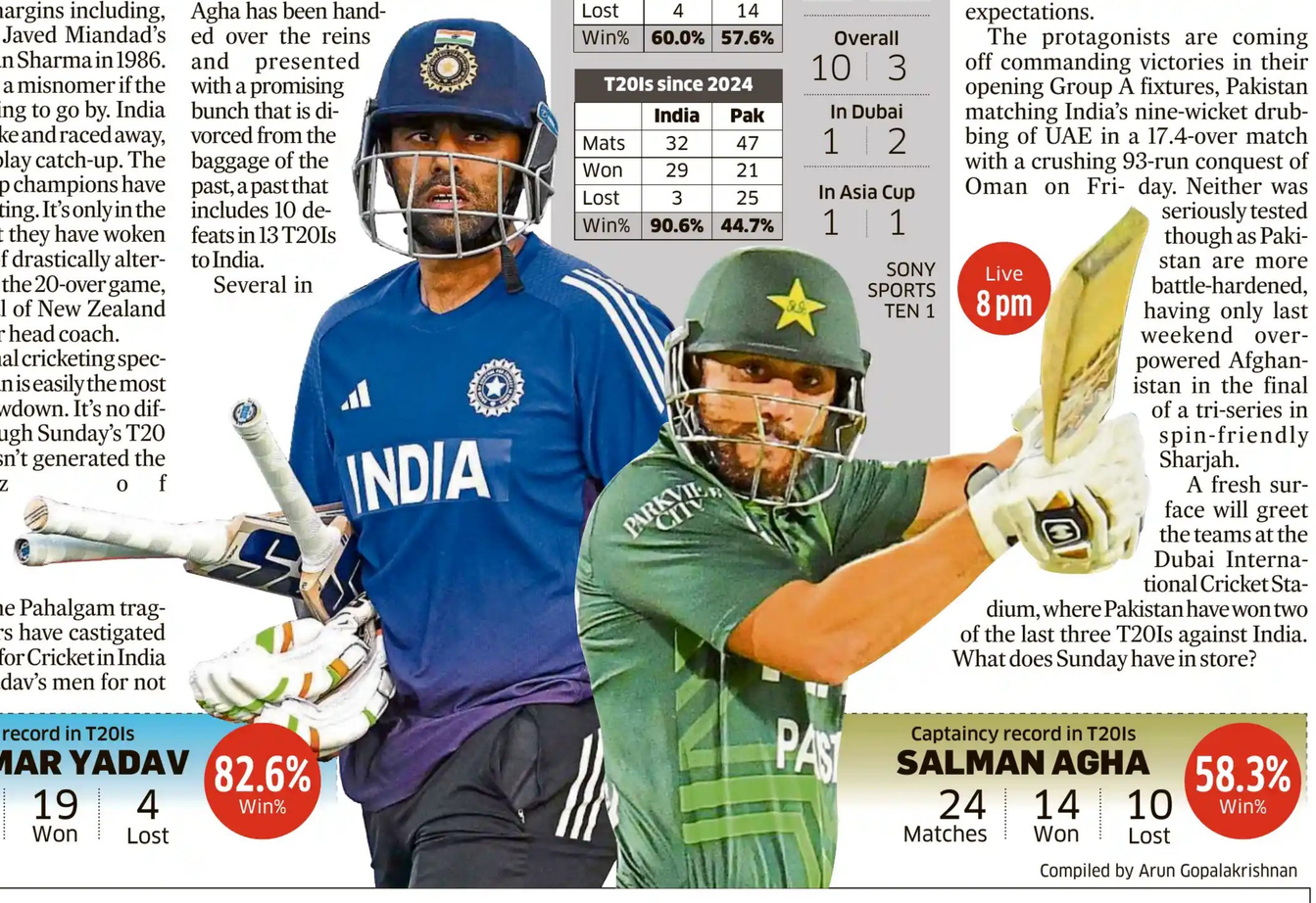
India embarked on the road to 20-over transition more than 14 months back, once Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli called time on their international T20 careers. Pakistan have only recently embraced that path, reacting to a slew of defeats and the inability to keep pace with the cream, by moving on from the days of Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan, both former captains. Salman Agha has been handed over the reins and presented with a promising bunch that is divorced from the baggage of the past, a past that includes 10 defeats in 13 T20Is to India.

Several in the Pakistani squad are still finding their feet and so carry the mystery of the unknown, but India will not be caught off guard. India have placed great faith in internalising and focussing on what they can do instead of obsessing over the opposition; that doesn't mean they wouldn't have done their homework and be unprepared for anything Pakistan might throw at them. They will derive confidence from the knowledge that if they play anywhere close to their full potential, they will be practically impossible to stop. The trick therefore is to insulate themselves to the extent possible from the inevitable extraneous weight of pressure and expectations.

The protagonists are coming off commanding victories in their opening Group A fixtures, Pakistan matching India's nine-wicket drubbing of UAE in a 17.4-over match with a crushing 93-run conquest of Oman on Fri- day. Neither was seriously tested though as Pakistan are more battle-hardened, having only last weekend overpowered Afghanistan in the final of a tri-series in spin-friendly Sharjah.

A fresh surface will greet the teams at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium, where Pakistan have won two of the last three T20Is against India. What does Sunday have in store?

Live 8 pm
SONY SPORTS TEN 1



THE BIG BATTLE

Overall record in Asia Cup T20Is

	INDIA*	PAKISTAN
Won	9	6
Mats	11	11
Lost	2	5
Win %:	81.8	54.6

*Championships 1

T20Is in Dubai	India	Pak
Mats	10	33
Won	6	19
Lost	4	14
Win%	60.0%	57.6%

T20Is since 2024	India	Pak
Mats	32	47
Won	29	21
Lost	3	25
Win%	90.6%	44.7%

Head to head in T20Is

IND		PAK
10	Overall	3
1	In Dubai	2
1	In Asia Cup	1

Captaincy record in T20Is
SURYAKUMAR YADAV
23 Matches | 19 Won | 4 Lost | 82.6% Win%

Captaincy record in T20Is
SALMAN AGHA
24 Matches | 14 Won | 10 Lost | 58.3% Win%

Compiled by Arun Gopalakrishnan

Pathum Nissanka

Nissanka, Mishara power SL to easy win

ABU DHABI, PTI: Six-time champions Sri Lanka opened their Asia Cup campaign with a six-wicket win over Bangladesh in a Group B match with opener Pathum Nissanka scoring a fine half-century, here on Saturday.

Batting first, Bangladesh scored a below-par 139 for 5, which was chased down by Sri Lanka in 14.4 overs.

Nissanka smashed 50 off 34 balls studded with six boundaries and a maximum. He shared a 95-run partnership for the second wicket with Kamil Mishara, who remained unbeaten on 46 (32 balls).

Earlier, Shamim Hossain (42 not out) and Jaker Ali (41 not out) pulled a faltering Bangladesh from a precarious position against Sri Lanka.

Shamim and Jaker revived the Bangladesh innings, reeling at 54 for five halfway through, by putting on unbeaten 86 runs for the sixth wicket in a crucial stand, which saved the blushes for the side.

Sri Lanka began with two consecutive wicket-maidens upfront and did not take the foot off the pedal to stifle Bangladesh.

Brief scores: Bangladesh: 139/5 in 20 overs (Litton Das 28, Jaker Ali 41 n.o., Shamim Hossain 42 n.o.; Wanindu Hasaranga 2-25) lt to Sri Lanka: 140/4 in 14.4 overs (Pathum Nissanka 50, Kamil Mishara 46 n.o.; Mahedi Hasan 2-29). **Result:** Sri Lanka won by 6 wkts. **PoM:** Kamil Mishara.

Pakistan's young batter Saim Ayub will be looking to make an impact in his first game against India in the Asia Cup on Sunday. AFP

Pak's Ayub unfazed by past defeats

Batter insists his team is focussing on the present

DUBAI, PTI

There is a quiet confidence that Saim Ayub exudes while answering tricky questions just like the effortless ease with which he plays the 'no-look' pick-up pull shot which has become his signature stroke in a nascent but eventful career so far.

So, when he was asked about his feelings about losing to India in New York in a T20 World Cup game last year which he didn't play, the retort was short and crisp.

"Sir, it has been a year and half. At that time, if you had asked me, I would have told you how I felt. Do you remember? I do not remember now," his reply was almost a counter-punch ahead of Pakistan's most important Asia Cup game against India on Sunday.

Does it make things easier that he doesn't know what kind of pressure is associated with an India game?

"I think this is the message of our team management for the last three-four months. The most important thing is to learn from the past and move forward. We don't want to remember the past and don't want to focus too much on the future."

The 23-year-old, who will compete against India for the first time in an international fixture, played down the hype just like all others do on the eve of the game.

"It is going to be a big match for the people. We do not see it like this as a team. We see that we follow the same process day by day in the next match."

Ayub wasn't ready to give the India match any extra importance and even brushed aside queries about his childhood memories of watching Indo-Pak games.

"Memories do not matter. This tournament matters the most. We are not just looking forward to the Pakistan-India match. We are looking forward to win the tournament."

His last four scores have been 0, 17, 11 and 0 but Ayub believes that the team management has a lot of confidence in his abilities.

"It's in our hands to just make an effort. No one can tell who will perform at the end of the day. We all trust each other," he kept it short.

However, he indicated that there wasn't much dew while bowling second against Oman and the wicket remained dry which might prompt head coach Mike Hesson and captain Salman Ali Agha to play all their three specialist spinners -- leg spinner Abrar Ahmed, left-arm orthodox spinner Mohammed Nawaz and left-arm wrist spinner Sufiyan Muqueem.

"If it looks too dry, then we go for three spinners. And if we feel that it is important to play fast bowlers, then we will go that way."

He also didn't feel that playing Jasprit Bumrah is a greater challenge for him even though he hasn't ever faced him.

"Definitely, it is a challenge. When you play a match, every type of bowler is a challenge for you. The biggest challenge is to make the team win. To find ways to do that. We are in the present moment. We are in the match. That is what is important."

Coach Gambhir urged players to focus on cricket: Doeschate

Head coach Gautam Gambhir avoided the pre-match press conference as fielding coach Ryan ten Doeschate attended instead on Saturday.

DUBAI, PTI

Head coach Gautam Gambhir's call to "focus on cricket" has been echoed by fielding coach Ryan ten Doeschate, who on Saturday acknowledged that boycott sentiments with regards to India's Asia Cup match against Pakistan is a sensitive issue but stressed that the team has been instructed to strictly follow the directives of the BCCI and the Indian government.

There have been widespread calls to ban any sporting ties with Pakistan following a terror attack on Indian tourists in Kashmir's Pahalgam.

Incidentally, in a departure from convention, the Indian team management sent its junior-most coaching staff Ten Doeschate, as there were apprehensions in the board corridors that had head coach Gautam Gambhir been sent, questions would have been asked about his earlier stand.

"It is a very sensitive issue. Players feel the emotion and sentiments of the public. This is what we have discussed in the team meetings. Players are here to play cricket. We are following government instructions," Ten Doeschate said.

With the boycott theme trending widely among fans, he added, "Our thing is, you separate sports and politics. I understand the sentiment but we are following the directives of the BCCI and the government. We are going by what the government and BCCI told us.

"Knowing this will happen was the most frustrating part. Gauti's message is to not focus on things not in your control. Messaging is to focus on cricket," he said.

Interestingly, Gambhir himself had taken a much harder line earlier. At an ABP event in New Delhi following the Pahalgam terror attack, he had said: "My personal answer to this is absolutely no. Till all this (cross-border terrorism) doesn't stop, there should not be anything between India and Pakistan.

CRICKET DULEEP TROPHY

Rathod puts Central in complete command

Southpaw's brilliant 194 powers Patidar's men to 511; SZ take stumps at 129/2

VIGNESH BHARADWAJ
BENGALURU, DHNS

From the very moment that Yash Rathod flicked one along the ground to the mid-wicket fence on the sixth ball of the morning, it looked like it was going to be a very long third day for South Zone at the BCCI's Centre of Excellence here in Bengaluru.

The same feeling persisted throughout the first session, where it looked like the hosts had put their swords away, conceding 104 runs in 34 overs.

However, post lunch, South looked like a completely different unit. They did not allow the tail to wag, picking four wickets in the next 7.1 overs, bowling CZ out for 511. In their second innings, they came out fighting with hunger and intent that they lacked for most of the first day as they finished 129/2 in 33 overs after bad light pushed for early stumps.

Karnataka's Ravichandran Smaran, who had thrown his wicket away cheaply in the first innings, looked steady, driving with no restraint. He also survived a close leg before shout that was overturned by the third umpire, to finish unbeaten on 37.

Ricky Bhui, too, was positive in intent and hung around with Smaran to see it through, as they closed the day out, having chiselled the deficit down to 233.

Mohit Kale (38) and Tanmay Agarwal (26) ensured the visitors would have to battle hard to breach into the middle order, negating the new ball. Kale took on Deepak Chahar, whom he whipped and flicked around the park. Just when things were starting to look particularly good, he was pinned by Saransh Jain.

Agarwal started nervously against pace, but soon found his feet, only for him to walk back for 22 after Kuldeep Sen's bail-trimmer kissing the off-stump.

Earlier in the day, Central Zone persisted to be cold-blooded as the overnight batters, Rathod and Saransh, seized their chances and continued to add to their lead.

It also looked like Central were doing South a favour, scoring 93 runs off Ricky Bhui in 26 overs, all without much risk, proving that picking just a specialist spinner in Ankit Sharma was a bad choice.

To make matters worse, Saransh nicked one to the keeper on 61, while looking to run it past slip. However, no SZ player picked it up and had their hands on their heads minutes later when they saw the replay on the big screen. They then burnt a review when the 34-year-old spinner's quicker one was going down leg.

Rathod, who started slowly, got back to work, milking runs and looking in ominous touch. However, he missed out on a well-deserved double ton when Gurpajneet nipped one back, which breached his defence on 194.

Deepak Chahar entertained with two sweetly struck sixes and three boundaries, before nicking it to the keeper on 37.

The left-arm spinner Ankit, who was logging in extra hours, finally ended Central Zone's 145.1-over stay, picking both Kumar Kartikeya and Aditya Thakare. The Puducherry spinner ended with figures of 4/180 in 45.1 overs. Gurjapneet, who bowled his heart out, running in for 28 overs, finished with 4/124.

This isn't the first time South Zone are chasing the game in the final. However, with the surface not playing many tricks, they will need to be disciplined, clinical and flawless to pull this rabbit out of the hat.

Central Zone's Yash Rathod flicks one to the boundary during his 194-run knock against South Zone at BCCI's Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru on Saturday. DH PHOTO/ PRASHANTH HG

SCOREBOARD

SOUTH ZONE (I Innings): 149 all out
CENTRAL ZONE (I Innings): Danish Malewar c Bhui b Gurjapneet 53 (120b, 5x4), Akshay Wadkar b Koushik 22 (60b, 3x4), Shubham Sharma b Gurjapneet 6 (18b, 1x4), Rajat Patidar c Azharuddeen b Gurjapneet 101 (115b, 12x4, 1x6), Yash Rathod b Gurjapneet 194 (286b, 17x4, 2x6), Upendra Yadav c Azharuddeen b Nidheesh 5 (10b), Saransh Jain b Ankit 69 (193b, 7x4), Deepak Chahar c Azharuddeen b Ankit 37 (49b, 3x4, 2x6), Kumar Kartikeya c & b Ankit 8 (12b, 1x4), Adithya Thakare c Tanay b Ankit 1 (7b), Kuldeep Sen (not out) 1 (7b). Extras (LB-7, NB-6, W-1) 14. **TOTAL (all out, 145.1 overs) 511**
Fall of wickets: 1-55 (Wadkar), 2-74 (Shubham), 3-93 (Malewar), 4-260 (Patidar), 5-266 (Upendra), 6-442 (Saransh), 7-500 (Rathod), 8-500 (Chahar), 9-509 (Aditya).
Bowling: Gurjapneet 28-2-124-4, Ankit 44.1-5-180-4, Nidheesh 19-4-43-1, Koushik 28-6-64-1, Bhui 26-2-93-0
SOUTH ZONE (II Innings): Tanmay Agarwal b Sen 26 (42b, 2x4), Mohit Kale lbw Jain 38 (61b, 7x4), Ravichandran Smaran (batting) 37 (50b, 5x4, 1x6), Ricky Bhui (batting) 26 (46b, 3x4, 1x6). Extras (NB-1, W-1) 2. **TOTAL (for 2 wkts, 33 overs) 129.**
Fall of wickets: 1-62 (Kale), 2-76 (Agarwal).
Bowling: Chahar 6-1-37-0, Thakare 6-2-15-0, Kartikeya 6-0-23-0, Saransh 10-1-32-1, Sen 5-1-22-1

Perfect dress rehearsal ahead of World Cup

MULLANPUR, PTI

Buoyed by recent encouraging results and revenge in mind, India will begin their final phase of preparations for the Women's World Cup with a three-match ODI series against Australia, starting here on Sunday.

For Harmanpreet Kaur's side, the series offers not just a chance to fine-tune combinations ahead of the home World Cup but also an opportunity to avenge the 0-3 whitewash suffered in Australia last December.

Since that setback, India have enjoyed an impressive run, sweeping Ireland 3-0 at home, winning a tri-series in Sri Lanka involving South Africa, and beating England across formats (T20Is 3-2, ODIs 2-1). All eyes will be on pacer Renuka Singh, who returns to international cricket after nearly nine months following a stress fracture. Renuka will lead India's three-pronged seam attack alongside Kranti Goud who is the highest wicket-taker in the England ODIs, and Arundhati Reddy. The spin department is well-stocked with Sneh Rana, who impressed during the Sri Lanka tri-series, young Shree Charani, as well as the seasoned duo of Deepti Sharma and Radha Yadav.

Renuka Singh

LIVE 1:30 PM STAR SPORTS

Records tumble as Eng humble SA

MANCHESTER, AFP: Phil Salt hit the highest score and quickest century by an England batsman in a T20 international as the hosts hammered South Africa by 146 runs to level their three-match series at 1-1 during a record-breaking evening at Old Trafford on Friday.

Brief scores: England: 304/2 in 20 overs (Phil Salt 141 n.o., Jos Buttler 83, Harry Brook 41 n.o.; Bjorn Fortuin 2-52) bt South Africa: 158 all out in 16.1 overs (Aiden Markram 41, Bjorn Fortuin 32; Jofra Archer 3-25, Sam Curran 2-11, Liam Dawson 2-34, Will Jacks 2-2) by 146 runs. **Series:** England level 3-match series 1-1. **PoM:** Phil Salt.

Third T20I: Sept 14 (Trent Bridge).

Ganguly, Harbhajan in BCCI's draft electoral roll

NEW DELHI, PTI: Former captain Sourav Ganguly, ex-India spinner Harbhajan Singh, BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia and IPL chairman Arun Singh Dhumal were on Saturday confirmed as the representatives of the Full Members of the BCCI, ahead of the board's AGM and general election here on September 28.

The Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) named Ganguly, a former BCCI president, as their representative in the AGM to be held at the board's headquarters, while Harbhajan will represent the Punjab Cricket Association.

Saikia and Dhumal will be representing Assam Cricket Association and Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association respectively.

Similarly, BCCI treasurer Prabhtej Singh Bhatia will represent the Chhattisgarh State Cricket Sangh while the board's joint secretary Rohan Gauns Dessai will be the nominee for the Goa state body, according to the list released by electoral officer AK Joti on Saturday.

BCCI vice-president Rajeev Shukla will represent the Uttar Pradesh Cricket Association while Sanjay Naik and Rohan Jaitley were named by the Mumbai Cricket Association and Delhi and District Cricket Association as their respective representatives.

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Nihal falls short against Firouzja in 9th round

SAMARKAND (UZBEKISTAN), PTI: Indian Grandmaster Nihal Sarin's hopes of making to the Candidates tournament suffered a setback as he lost to Alireza Firouzja of France in the ninth round of the FIDE Grand Swiss here on Saturday.

With just two rounds left in the tournament, Nihal remained on six points and will now need to win his last two games to compete for a top-two finish that assures a place among the eight slots available for the Candidates.

Nihal fought on for nearly seven hours and almost pulled off a draw from an inferior endgame before Alireza struck.

R Praggnanandhaa was held to another draw by American talent Awonder Liang and needs a miracle now to finish in top two. However, Praggnanandhaa is still likely to make it to the Candidates as he has a huge lead in his tournament scores this year over nearest rivals.

The Indian hopes in the open section now rest heavily on Nihal, Arjun Erigaisi.

Meanwhile, Alireza shot to joint lead with German duo of Vincent Keymer and Matthias Bluebaum along with Dutchman Anish Giri on 6.5 points while Nihal and Arjun are in the group of players that closely follow them.

BADMINTON

A Saturday to savour for Indian shuttlers

Lakshya, doubles ace Satwik-Chirag storm into final in Hong Kong Open

HONG KONG, PTI

India's Satwiksairaj Rankireddy (back) and Chirag Shetty defeated Chinese Taipei's Bing-Wei Lin and Chen Cheng-Kuan to make their first final of the season at the Hong Kong Open on Saturday. AFP FILE PHOTO

India's Lakshya Sen entered his first major final in two years after edging out Chinese Taipei's Chou Tien Chen in straight games, while the men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty also stormed into the summit clash here on Saturday.

The 23-year-old from Almora, a 2021 World Championships bronze medallist, ended a long wait for a title shot with a fighting 23-21, 22-20 win over world No. 9 and third seed Chou in a gruelling 56-minute semifinal.

The Commonwealth Games champion had last won a Super 500 tournament at the Canada Open in July 2023. He also clinched a Super 300 title at the Syed Modi International in Lucknow in December last year.

Currently ranked world No. 20, Lakshya will face second seed Li Shi Feng of China in the final.

Earlier, the world No. 9 duo of Satwik and Chirag defeated Chinese Taipei's Bing-Wei Lin and Chen Cheng-Kuan 21-17, 21-15 to make their first final of the season after six semifinal heartbreaks. The eighth-seeded Indians will take on China's Liang Wei Keng and Wang Chang, silver medallists at the Paris Olympics.

"Finals, finally. It's been seven semifinals since China Open last year. We've been constantly playing semifinals and I think we really wanted to play a final. It's been a while," Chirag said.

"The last final we played was the Thailand Open, probably in May, before the Olympics. We really wanted to do well here and I think we're really happy. Still one more match to go, but overall it's been a good final.

"World Championships was good, although we would have loved to play the final, but I think the pairs that we beat with the confidence that we had coming into the World Championships, it was quite good. But having said that, yeah, really happy that we are playing a final here, finally broke that semifinal jinx."

Lakshya read his opponent's attack well during the close-to-an-hour contest to stay ahead for most of the match. He was up 3-0 in the first game, but the 35-year-old Chou kept snapping at his heels before the Indian secured a four-point cushion at the break.

Chou clawed back to 12-12 with four straight points. Lakshya was pushed hard, not just in the first game, but even in the second but the Indian showed superb character to emerge victorious.

Esha shoots gold to end India's drought

20-year-old edges out favourite Yao in 10m air pistol final

NINGBO (CHINA), PTI

Esha Singh (left) celebrates with coach Ronak Pandit after winning the women's 10m air pistol gold. X

Olympian and reigning mixed team pistol world champion Esha Singh ended India's medal drought at the ISSF World Cup Rifle/Pistol, clinching gold in the women's 10m air pistol here on Saturday.

At the Ningbo Olympic Sports Centre, the 20-year-old edged out home favourite Yao Qianxun by 0.1 point in a tense final. Reigning Olympic champion Oh Yejin of South Korea took the bronze.

This was Esha's maiden World Cup gold in the event and it helped India move to fifth spot in the medal standings, joining four other nations with a gold medal.

Hosts China lead the standings with two gold, four silver and one bronze. India have fielded their fourth to sixth ranked shooters in each event at the tournament.

"I am very happy as this is the first event that I started with and to win a World Cup gold in it...I am just happy that some of my goals are being reached," Esha said.

Speaking on the next challenges ahead, she said, "Yes, obviously the World Championship is the next big one for the year. We are training very hard for it and I am sure you will see very good things from its them all the time so I now know that the pistol is in my hand and the battle is with me so I try to enjoy the match as much as possible."

Esha and team-mate Rhythm Sangwan had qualified for the final with identical scores of 578, securing the last two available spots.

Yao topped qualification with 584, while India's Palak Gulia, competing for ranking points, shot 586. Surbhi Rao finished 25th with 568.

In the eight-shooter final, Rhythm began strongly, leading after the first series with Esha in second.

By the halfway mark, Esha moved into the lead while Rhythm slipped to fifth, where she eventually finished.

As eliminations progressed, both Indians maintained composure. Rhythm briefly climbed to fourth with a 10.8 on her 15th shot but bowed out after the 18th.

Esha, meanwhile, maintained her rhythm, producing two 10.7s at crucial stages to stave off Yao's late surge.

She sealed the gold with a final score of 242.6, just 0.1 clear of the Chinese shooter.

Siege Courageous wins feature

PUNE RESULTS

Prasanna Kumar-trained Siege Courageous and ridden by Akshay Kumar won the Supreme Pune City Gold Cup, the feature event of the races on Saturday.

1. Colombiana Plate - 2000M: Looking Like A Wow (Ramswarup) 1; Daiaane (Bhawani Singh) 2; Silver Braid (Aditya Waydande) 3; Leo The Lion (N Bhosale) 4; Wb: 2-1/2, 4-1/4, 4L. T: 2:09.02. TB: Subhag Singh. Fav: Looking Like A Wow.

2. Conrad Hotels Trophy (Div II) -1000M: Yourforfame (Sonu Chouhan) 1; House Of Lords (A Prakash) 2; Abhicandra (Sandesh) 3; Regal Galleria (P Dhebe) 4; Wb: 3-1/2, Lnk, 1, 2-1/4L. T: 0:50.43. TB: Pradeep Chouhan. Fav: Zephyr.

3. Uttam Singh Trophy - 1800M: Arrived (Sandesh) 1; Treat (Neeraj Rawal) 2; Zarak (Pranil) 3; Manasa Musa (Siddarth) 4; Wb: 7-1/2, 2-1/4, 2-3/4L. T: 1:52.45. TB: Nirad Karanjawala. Fav: Arrived.

4. Aakriti Art Gallery Trophy - 1400M: Celestial (G Vivek) 1; Ataash (Trevor Patel) 2; Singer Sargent (C Umesh) 3; Mr Brainwash (SG Prasad) 4; Wb: 3/4, 1-3/4L, Nk. T: 1:26.46. TB: Pesi Shroff. Fav: Celestial.

5. Supreme Pune City Gold Cup - 1600M: Siege Courageous (Akshay Kumar) 1; Jade (G Vivek) 2; Snowfall (Trevor Patel) 3; Madam Rich (P Dhebe) 4; Wb: 4-3/4, 3-3/4, 4L,. T: 1:38.69. TB: Prasanna Kumar. Fav: Jade.

6. Fourth Estate Trophy - 2000M: Golden Dancer (DR Thacker) Sandesh 1; Solidarity (G Vivek) 2; Dexterity (Neeraj Rawal) 3; Harrison (TS Jodha) 4; Wb: Dist, 2L, Nk. T: 2:55.96. TB: D Todywalla. Fav: Golden Dancer.

7. Conrad Hotels Trophy (Div I) -1000M: Azure (Neeraj Rawal) 1; Storm Cloud (Umesh) 2; Mojo (Ritesh Gochhi) 3; Scaramouche (Aditya Waydande) 4; Wb: 1-1/4, Hd, 1/2L. T: 0:59.01. TB: Imtiaz Sait. Fav: Azure.

8. La Rondine Plate - 1400M: Substantial (Sandesh) 1; Wind Dancer (Trevor Patel) 2; Come September (Umesh) 3; Bohemian Rhapsody (Nazil) 4; Wb: 1-3/4, 2-1/4, 2L. T: 1:28.04. TB: Nirad Karanjawala. Fav: Substantial.

Bengaluru dividends

I race: Rs 19w; 13, 22p; Fc: Rs 81; Q: Rs 19; Shp: Rs 25; Thp: Rs 25; Tri: Rs 198 & 129; Ex: Rs 7,674 & 19,733.**II race:** Rs 110w; Rs 30, 15, 20p; Fc: Rs 797; Q: Rs 200; Shp: Rs 50; Thp: Rs 41; Tri: Rs 2,369 & 1,093; Ex: Rs 59,788. **III race:** Rs 13w; 11, 12p; Fc: Rs 24; Q: Rs 20; Shp: Rs 19; Thp: Rs 37; Tri: Rs 101 & 65. **IV race:** Rs 24w; 14, 12, 18p; Fc: Rs 57; Q: Rs 15; Shp: Rs 32; Thp: Rs 39; Tri: Rs 55 & 36. Ex: Rs 102 & 140. **V race:** Rs 23w; 12, 13p; Fc: Rs 23; Q: Rs 12; Shp: Rs 22; Thp: Rs 17; Tri: Rs 27 & 20. **VI race:** Rs 15w; 10, 10, 13p; Fc: Rs 28; Q: Rs 32; Shp: Rs 25; Thp: Rs 34; Tri: Rs 33 & 32; Ex: Rs 885 & 759. **VII race:** Rs 18w; 11, 27, 19p; Fc: Rs 148; Q: Rs 97; Shp: Rs 62; Thp: Rs 68; Tri: Rs 688 & 429; Ex: Rs 1,415 & 690. **VIII race:** Rs 21w; 12, 16, 13p; Fc: Rs 92; Q: Rs 63; Shp: Rs 48; Thp: Rs 56; Tri: Rs 127 & 48; Ex: Rs 592 & 331.

Jackpot: Rs 579. (792). **Runner-up:** Rs 97 (2023). **I treble:** Rs 105 (52). **II treble:** Rs 50 (188).

Dyf fancied for main event

HYDERABAD SELECTIONS

Nirad Karanjawala-trained Dyf, to be ridden by P Trevor, is fancied to win the President Of India Gold Cup, the feature event of the races to be run over a distance of mile and a half at the races on Sunday. The first race starts at 1:20 pm.

1. Narayanpet Plate (Div II) - 1200M: Zuza 1, Double Bubble 2, Blazing Saddle 3.
2. Director General Of Police Cup - 1400M: Perception 1, Brilliant Lad 2,Gloria 3.
3. Totaram's Cup - 1600M: N R I Sport 1, Noble Heart 2, China Town 3.
4. Artillary Cup - 1100M: State Man 1, Faizah 2, N R I Blaze 3.
5. President Of India Gold Cup - 2400M: Dyf 1, Star Of Night 2, Truth 3.
6. Narayanpet Plate (Div I) - 1200M: Cherish The Lady 1, In Proposito 2, Dashing Charm 3.

Day's best: Zuza. **Jackpot:** 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. **I treble:** 1, 2, 3. **II treble:** 4, 5, 6.

Minakshi Hooda

Mesmerising Minakshi soars into World Championship final

LIVERPOOL, PTI

Debutant Minakshi Hooda continued her sparkling run to become the third Indian woman boxer to storm into the final of the World Championships, outclassing Mongolia's Lutsaikhany Altantsetseg in commanding fashion here on Saturday.

The former Asian Championships and World Cup silver medallist delivered a near-flawless performance, registering a resounding 5-0 victory over the 2023 World Championships runner-up in the 48kg semifinal, which is a non-Olympic weight class, at the M&S Bank Arena.

With her triumph, the lanky 24-year-old joined Commonwealth Games bronze medallist Jaismine Lamboria (57kg) and heavyweight Nupur Sheoran (+80kg) in the finals. Both Jaismine and Nupur had marched into the title round a day earlier, ensuring a strong Indian presence in the finals.

Such has been Minakshi's dominance at the ongoing championships that every one of her victories has come via unanimous verdict. After receiving a first-round bye, she dispatched China's Wang Qiuping and England's Alice Pumphrey with identical 5-0 scorelines.

With a podium secured here, she continues her remarkable streak of winning a medal at every international tournament she has entered.

Born to an auto-rickshaw driver in Rurki, the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) constable fused aggression with composure, making optimum use of her reach to dictate the tempo. She stamped her authority from the opening exchanges.

Never Give In wins feature

CHENNAI RESULTS

Arjun Manglorkar-trained Never Give In and ridden by Antony Raj won the Stewards Cup, the feature event of the races on Saturday.

1. Midnight Cowboy Handicap - 1100M: Saint Emilion (Pavan) 1; Black Floral (MS Deora) 2; Western Girl (N Darshan) 3; Star Aristocracy (Farid Ansari) 4; Wb: 2-1/2, 1-1/4, 1/2L. T: 1:07.23. TB: Suraj Shaw. Fav: Black Floral.

2. Commanche Handicap -1400M: Saintly Star (Koshi Kumar) 1; Aviothic (Inayat) 2; Avantador (Manish) 3; Royal Supremacy (Ankit Pal) 4; Wb: 1-3/4, 1-1/2L, Lnk. T: 1:29.14. TB: B.Suresh. Fav: Aviothic.

3. Kranchi Plate - 1200M: Shibra (Ashhad Asbar) 1; Black Diamond (Yash Narredu) 2; Elsa (AS Peter) 3; Star Power (Koshi Kumar) 4; Wb: 4, 1-1/4, 3-1/2L. T: 1:13.91. TB: Zulquarnain. Fav: Black Diamond.

4. Stewards Cup - 1200M: Never Give In (Antony Raj) 1; Crown Royal (N Darshan) 2; Decacorn (Pavan) 3; Glorious King (Yash Narredu) 4; Wb: 1/2, 3/4, 3/4L. T: 1:11.30. TB: Arjun Mangalorkar. Fav: Never Give In.

5. Topmost Handicap - 1600M: Blue Picasso (Antony Raj) 1; Legacy (Yash Narredu) 2; Balgownie (Inayat) 3; War Emblem (MS Deora) 4; Wb: 1, 2-1/2, 5-3/4L,. T: 1:40.85. TB: Darius Byramji. Fav: Legacy.

6. Prince Royal Handicap - 1400M: Disciple (Antony Raj) 1; Vishwas (MS Deora) 2; Romping Home (Yash Narredu) 3; Royal Chivalry (Shah Alam) 4; Wb: 1-1/2, 1, 5-1/2L. T: 1:25.24. TB: Arjun Mangalorkar. Fav: Romping Home.

Bengaluru dividends

I race: Rs 187w; 33, 15, 42p; Fc: Rs 894; Q: Rs 248; Shp: Rs 27; Thp: Rs 80; Tri: Rs 4,331 & 3,712; Ex: Rs 6,754 & 2,894. **II race:** Rs 273w; Rs 52, 14, 50p; Fc: Rs 2,008; Q: Rs 1,202; Shp: Rs 34; Thp: Rs 90; Tri: Rs 45,625 (c/o); Ex: Rs 32,570 (c/o). **III race:** Rs 42w; 15, 10, 20p; Fc: Rs 127; Q: Rs 49; Shp: Rs 48; Thp: Rs 40; Tri: Rs 502 & 205; Ex: Rs 6,808 & 3,751. **IV race:** Rs 15w; 12, 14, 28p; Fc: Rs 39; Q: Rs 30; Shp: Rs 24; Thp: Rs 52; Tri: Rs 203 & 162. Ex: Rs 516 & 171. **V race:** Rs 50w; 13, 10, 15p; Fc: Rs 68; Q: Rs 20; Shp: Rs 60; Thp: Rs 30; Tri: Rs 225 & 169; Ex: Rs 1,008 & 1,169. **VI race:** Rs 34w; 14, 17, 11p; Fc: Rs 282; Q: Rs 165; Shp: Rs 38; Thp: Rs 68; Tri: Rs 148 & 61; Ex: Rs 1,864 & 1,797.

Jackpot: Rs 7,66,31 (c/o). **Runner-up:** Rs 8,210 (4). **Treble:** Rs 170 (31).

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ANNOUNCEMENT

The Sengundhar community is spread across Karnataka. We are contributing both to our community's progress as well as the development of the state. At present, our community is classified under the IIA (2A) category, with 15% reservation in education and employment.
However, the caste census report submitted by the Karnataka State Backward Classes Commission has had a severe impact on our weaver community. The figures mentioned in the report have caused significant concern. Therefore, through the Weavers' Communities Federation, we have urged the government to review and reassess these figures.
To address this situation and bring to the government's attention the true population of our backward weaver community, supported with proper evidence, it is essential that you all register on our website: **https://nekaaraokkuta.in**
If we fail to organize ourselves and fight collectively, we may lose the current 15% reservation, which would have disastrous consequences for our future and for generations to come. Hence, we request all of you residing across the state to register immediately and also inform your relatives, friends, and family members in other districts about this.
Please log in and register through our website:
https://nekaaraokkuta.in

For more information, you may contact our association representatives:
Sri V.T. Pichandi : 93412 80248
D. Chandrashekar : 94488 54014

Dear brothers, we request you to complete this process within the month of September.
Thank you
Always at your service,
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PERSONAL

Announcements

ANNOUNCEMENT
I **P PARTHIBAN,** R/at Flat No: 204, Peddanagaru residency, Dodda Banaswadi, Kalyananagar, Bengaluru-560043, declare that in my daughter **S P SHRIMATHI** (Unique ID No: 8142078), 10th Std ICSE Marks Card & Pass Certificate, (St.Charles High School), my name is mentioned as P PRATHIBAN. My correct name is **P PARTHIBAN,** affidavit dtd 12.9.2025 notary Uday kumar. K, Bangalore.

Change of Name

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **Nihal Bangalore Krishnamurthy,** S/o Krishnamurthy S, residing at No. 1259, 10th Main Road, Vijayanagar, Bengaluru-560040,, have changed my name to **NIHAAL KRISHNA** vide affidavit dated 13.09.2025 before notary H.S. Sakalesh Aradhya, Bengaluru.

I, LINGARAJU. A. S/o.Late. Andanaiah R/a.#04, Mallenahalli Village Gutthalahunase Maralavadi Hobli, Kanakapura Taluk, Ramanagar Dist. 562121. Declare that ANDANAIAH, ANDANAPPA and ANDANIGOWDA all`Names are one`and the same person,which represents my Father's Name. Vide`affidavit dated:1.9.2025 before`Notary G.R.Rajanna, Bangalore.

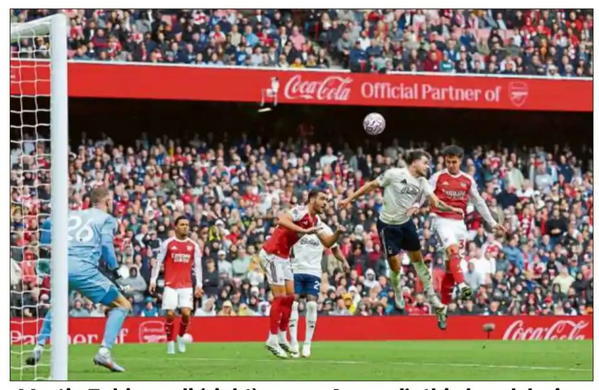
CHANGE OF NAME
I, **SUMA .T,** W/o Mr. Mallesh M.K, age 42 years, R/at No. 80, Margondanahalli, Krishnarajapuram, Bengaluru North-560 036 do hereby declare that I have changed my daughter's name from **M. DEEPTHI** to **M. SAMVEDA RIDHAANSHI,** henceforth she shall be known and called as **M. SAMVEDA RIDHAANSHI** for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 10-09-2025, sworn before Advocate and Notary **T.C. THIMMARAJA** at Bangalore.

Lost

LOST OF DOCUMENT
I, Vijayalakshmi Ashok W/o Ashok kumar No. 18, 3rd Cross, 8th Main, BDA Layout 1st Block East Jayanagar, Bangalore-560011 have Lost my Original Notary GPA Copy and Original Absolute sale deed BNG(U) KNGR/50061/2004-2005 No.62, 32/2, 33/62 at Konanakunte Village, Uttarahalli Hobli, Dated: 15/07/25 while travelling. **Finder Please Contact: 7795026445**

Zubimendi's double for Arsenal stings Forest

LONDON, AFP



Martin Zubimendi (right) scores Arsenal's third goal during their 3-0 win over Nottingham Forest at the Emirates Stadium in London on Saturday. REUTERS

A Martin Zubimendi double took Arsenal top of the Premier League as Ange Postecoglou's first game in charge of Nottingham Forest ended in a 3-0 defeat, while Nick Woltemade's debut goal earned Newcastle's first win of the season against Wolves on Saturday.

Postecoglou made a swift return to north London after being sacked by Tottenham in June but did not enjoy a dream debut in the Forest dugout against a ruthless Arsenal.

Mikel Arteta's men had two weeks over the international break to mull over losing 1-0 to title rivals Liverpool due to Dominik Szoboszlai's stunning free-kick.

But the Gunners made it three wins from four games thanks to an unlikely goalscoring hero. Zubimendi scored just 10 times in 236 games for Real Sociedad and commanded a £60 million ($81 million) fee in the transfer window due to his defensive abilities and distribution from the base of the midfield.

However, the Spanish international smashed home a blistering volley from outside the box to break Forest's resistence on 32 minutes.

Woltemade did his best to make Newcastle fans forget the departed Alexander Isak with an immediate impact in a 1-0 win for the home side at St. James' Park.

Bournemouth moved up to third thanks to Antoine Semenyo's winner from the penalty spot to beat Brighton 2-1.

Results: Arsenal: 3 (Zubimendi 32nd, 79th, Gyokeres 46th) bt Nottingham Forest: 0; Bournemouth: 2 (Scott 18th, Semenyo 61st) bt Brighton: 1 (Mitoma 48th); Crystal Palace: 0 drew with Sunderland: 0; Everton: 0 drew with Aston Villa: 0; Fulham: 1 (Gudmundsson 90th+4) bt Leeds: 0; Newcastle: 1 (Woltemade 29th) bt Wolves: 0.

Brilliant Mbappe

Kylian Mbappe was at his brilliant best as Real Madrid showed grit to claim a 2-1 win at Real Sociedad in La Liga on Saturday, despite playing for an hour with 10 men after Dean Huijsen's red card in San Sebastian, Spain.

Results: Getafe: 2 (Martin 45th+4, Mayoral 45th+9) bt Real Oviedo: 0; Real Sociedad: 1 (Oyarzabal 56th) lt to Real Madrid: 2 (Mbappe 12th, Guler 44th).

India to take on favourites China in final

HANGZHOU (CHINA), PTI

India's Lalremsiami tries to score during their game against Japan on Saturday. HI

Indian women's hockey team qualified for the Asia Cup final despite playing out a 1-1 draw against Japan after hosts China beat Korea 1-0 in the last match of the Super 4 stage here on Saturday.

India will face China in the summit clash on Sunday, and the winning team will qualify for next year's World Cup in Belgium and the Netherlands.

After the 1-1 draw against defending champions Japan, India had to wait for the result of the match between Korea and China, who have already qualified for the final.

Korea needed to win by a margin of at least two goals to qualify for the final, but China's victory ensured that India, the third-place finisher in the 2022 edition, made it to the summit clash.

China topped the Super 4s table with nine points after three wins, while India ended at second with four points from one win, one draw and one loss. Korea secured just one point -- one draw and two losses -- to end at the bottom. Japan finished third with two points.

Zacharias for main event

PUNE SELECTIONS

Zacharias, from the stables of Pesi Shroff and to be ridden by Vivek G, is fancied to win the SA Poonawalla Million, the feature event of the races to be run over a mile at the races on Sunday. The first race starts at 1 pm.

1. Excellent Sorrento Plate - 1200M: Ariyana Star 1, Arbitrage 2, Zip Along 3.
2. Excellent Trophy - 1200M: Divine Star 1,Dream Seller 2, Turn And Burn 3.
3. Serum Institute Of India Trophy - 2400M: Bugatti 1, Black Thunder 2.
4. Villoo C Poonawalla Million - 1200M: Mutual Trust 1, All For Love 2, Foxy 3.
5. SA Poonawalla Million - 1600M: Zacharias 1, Gun Smoke 2, Ice On Fire 3.
6. Suraiya & Masoom Master Trophy - 1200M: Aperol 1, Social Butterly 2, Western Star 3.
7. Sultan Suleiman Plate - 1600M: Kings Gambit 1, Saseka 2, Beyond Stars 3.

Day's best: Divine Star.
Jackpot: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.
Treble: 4, 5, 6.

KNOWN UNKNOWNS

When councils fail: From Hastinapura to modern boardrooms

Gopichand Katragadda
The former CTO of Tata Group and founder of AI company Myelin Foundry is driven to peel off known facts to discover unknown layers
@Gkatragadda

Following the passing of Sunjay Kapur earlier this year, the Sona Comstar board found itself in a family succession struggle. His mother sought a postponement of the annual general meeting, but the board, citing procedure, pressed ahead. The clash laid bare how succession is not only a family matter but also a test of Board effectiveness. India's first all-electric ride-hailing platform, BluSmart, suspended operations in April 2025 amid allegations that co-founder Anmol Singh Jaggi misappropriated funds from Gensol Engineering, sparking a governance crisis, mass resignations of independent directors, and a collapse that affected drivers, investors, and enterprise value. These examples illustrate the ongoing need for robust governance frameworks driven by competent Boards as companies expand and scale. Across public enterprises, listed corporations, and private companies alike, Boards are charged with safeguarding fairness, ensuring accountability, and guiding institutions through prosperity and peril.

The *Mahabharata* offers powerful lessons in terms of councils and governance. In the Kuru court, Draupadi was dragged into the assembly after the fateful dice game. Humiliated, she asked with clarity: "Whom did Yudhishthira stake first, himself or me? If he lost himself, how could he stake me?" It was a piercing question of law and justice. Yet the council, filled with the mightiest of elders, fell silent.

Dhritarashtra, the blind king, paralysed by his attachment to Duryodhana, is unwilling to uphold fairness. Bheeshma and Dronacharya, the grandsire and the teacher, had the stature to intervene but had bound themselves in oaths and obligations, their hands tied by promises of loyalty. Karna, the generous and valiant warrior, might have stood for justice, but his own sense of illegitimacy – the shadow of being raised outside his true lineage – fuelled an inner conflict. His imposter syndrome pushed him to side with Duryodhana even when his conscience wavered. And Duryodhana, headstrong and triumphant, revelled in the spectacle, driving the council further into ruin.

That collective silence was the actual collapse of governance. Long before Kurukshetra, Hastinapura had already lost its moral centre in the council chamber. It is tempting to leave this episode in the realm of epic tragedy. Yet, when we examine it through the lens of our own times, it becomes a parable about governance. The Kuru court can be read as a boardroom: Dhritarashtra, the compromised Chair, Duryodhana, the domineering MD, Bheeshma and Drona, the promoter-directors who chose loyalty over conscience, and Karna, the conflicted independent director. Their failure to speak or act promptly mirrors the lapses we continue to see in modern institutions.

We see echoes of that silence today. In India, the Comptroller and Auditor General recently flagged that 26 out of 71 central public sector enterprises lacked proper board composition, more than 50 had inadequate independent directors, and 20 did not have a woman director. When promoters and insiders dominate, and when independents are either missing or conflicted, the boardroom turns into Hastinapura's court – a theatre of loyalty rather than a forum of conscience.

Globally, too, governance lapses are writ large. At the World Economic Forum, Klaus Schwab's resignation came only after whistleblower accounts of toxic culture and misuse of resources. Trustees had to overrule their founder to launch an independent probe. Even institutions that sit at the high table of global dialogue are not immune when councils defer too long to their leaders.

The patterns are not lost on regulators. In India, the 2025 amendments to the Companies Act have tightened compliance requirements, including real-time disclosures within seven days, heavier penalties for lapses, and a stronger emphasis on transparency. These are attempts to ensure boards cannot hide behind process delays or passive silence.

Globally as well, boards are playing the balancing act: they must weigh agility against oversight, embrace technology such as AI for decision support without compromising judgement, and anticipate geopolitical risks even as they champion sustainability.

And yet, not all is bleak. There are examples of good governance worth emulating. Several Indian boards have taken commendable steps in recent years – from transparent succession planning in companies, to professionalising family-owned firms by inducting truly independent directors, to strengthening board diversity in sectors such as banking. Globally, companies such as Unilever have set benchmarks in sustainability-driven governance, while Microsoft and Apple have been praised for clear succession pathways and robust risk committees. Even some sovereign wealth funds have restructured their boards to incorporate external voices with expertise in environmental and societal knowledge.

The *Mahabharata* warns us that councils that remain silent in the face of wrongdoing do not just cause short-term issues; they have long-term consequences for all stakeholders. The positive stories today remind us of the opposite: when boards are diverse, independent, transparent, and courageous, they go beyond merely preserving value. They create it.

THE BIG LENS

The peacemaker's power games

The President of the United States of America probably believes that the road to peace is through war. War brings eventual peace, and to fight wars, America needs a ministry of war. Simple. President Trump claims to be brokering peace in at least three conflicts: India-Pakistan, Russia-Ukraine, and Israel-Hamas. Eyes still on the Nobel Peace Prize, Trump has signed a Presidential Order to rename the Department of Defence as the Department of War. This restores the earlier nomenclature for the department. The Department of War, created in 1789, became the Department of Defence in 1949, with an amendment to the National Security Act of 1947, unifying the branches of the military: Army, Navy, and Air Force.

While it is the prerogative of the US President to change the names of departments under his administration, it is not clear as to how changing this change will make America great again, any sooner than what the Department of Defence would have achieved.

The US has two immediate neighbours, Canada to the north and Mexico to the South, with whom the country shares land borders. So, it has no enemies in its neighborhood to fight a war, unless the present occupant of the White House decides to create one by antagonising friends and turning them into foes. All the wars that America has fought, beginning in the last century, have been miles away from its territory, be it Vietnam, Afghanistan, or Iraq. In all these wars, America's military can claim victory, but questions about achieving the long-term objectives of the wars remain unanswered, despite the huge costs, regional imbalance, and lack of tangible benefits.

One notable aspect of the several conflicts in the first quarter of the century is the use of technology, which has surpassed the deployment of manpower. America has had the time and the economic power over the last few years of the last century to analyse the outcomes of the wars it fought and make a course correction by improving its satellite technology, operational agility, logistic support, and command systems that control modern warfare.

Seshadri Chari
reads between the lines on big national and international developments from his vantage point in the BJP and the RSS
@seshadrichari

All this was probably made possible by several layers of institutional frameworks functioning under the command and control system of the Department of Defence. Will the Department of War retain these structures? There are already murmurs in the corridors of the Pentagon about the huge cost involved in creating new stationery instead of making use of the dollars for capacity building and improving the conditions of the men and machinery.

Besides, America should also worry about the technological quantum jump made by its bête noire, China. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) has transformed itself into one of the most modern, technologically superior, and war-ready military forces. China is considered to be superior in several critical areas such as missile, drone and hypersonic technology, naval capabilities, cyber warfare, artificial intelligence and robotics, and more importantly, psychological warfare.

The *British Military Doctrine* (1989) identifies the "physical, intellectual and moral" aspects of defence preparedness as three salient components of military effectiveness and fighting power. The 'physical' includes weapons, manpower, troop movement logistics, etc., while the 'intellectual' is all about understanding the nuances of the conflict, and systems and processes to be deployed. The 'moral' component involves a study of the cultural and social aspects of the opponent, knowledge of the enemy force, and its civilisational strengths and weaknesses. Modern warfare is not confined to defence equipment and firepower.

Commenting on America's wars, Maj. Gen. Robert H Scales Jr., US Army (Retd) writes, "War is a thinking man's game. Wars are won as much by creating alliances, leveraging non-military advantages, reading intentions, building trust, converting opinions, and managing perceptions; all tasks that demand an exceptional ability to understand people, their culture, and their motivation".

In the future, America may not have the luxury of choosing the battleground, the time, the means, or the methods of war. The Department of War will now have to coordinate with several of the departments under the dispensation in the White House. These departments may not always be happy about the superiority of the Pentagon, the headquarters of the Department of War. President Trump would be well advised to realise and appreciate the need for a better understanding of the cultural, social, and civilisational aspects, and the strengths and weaknesses of the countries he is planning to deal with, through war, peace, or trade.

THAT BLIND RHODES SCHOLAR

The costs of closing shadow libraries

On August 19, the Delhi High Court passed a sweeping order blocking access to both Sci-Hub and its sister platform Sci-Net from India. This outcome represents a turning point in the long-running litigation between international publishing giants and Alexandra Elbakyan, the founder of these so-called "shadow libraries." Yet, the court's approach ultimately missed the deeper question of how Indian copyright law should balance exclusive rights with the constitutional promise of access to education.

In December 2020, Elbakyan gave an unequivocal undertaking before the court: no new copyrighted content belonging to the plaintiffs (Elsevier, Wiley, American Chemical Society) would be uploaded on Sci-Hub until further orders. That undertaking was repeatedly extended over the years. The plaintiffs, however, produced evidence in 2025 that this undertaking had been violated on two fronts. First, Sci-Hub was found hosting works published after 2022. Second, Elbakyan had launched a parallel platform, Sci-Net, which invited users to request and access new copyrighted articles through cryptocurrency-based accounts.

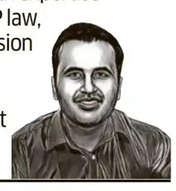
The plaintiffs argued that this was a deliberate attempt to evade the court's orders, pointing to screenshots, DOI-linked redirections between the two platforms, and hundreds of post-2022 articles available for download.

In response, Elbakyan admitted that new articles were accessible, but claimed this was due to a "technical error," and argued that Sci-Net was a separate project not covered by the undertaking. The court rejected this defence, treating the undertaking as binding across both platforms.

In a 2019 case, the Delhi High Court had characterised websites that substantially host infringing content as rogue websites and outlined factors to determine their "rogue"-ness. The court held that Sci-Hub's primary purpose was copyright infringement, its operator had shown blatant disregard for copyright laws, and it had already been blocked in multiple jurisdictions. Significantly, Elbakyan's counsel sought discharge and stated he had no instructions. As a result, the court heard no substantive defence from the defendants.

The most striking omission from the order is any engagement with India's fair dealing framework under Section 52 of the Copyright Act, 1957. Uses of platforms like Sci-Hub could plausibly fall within Section 52(1)(a) of the Copyright Act (fair dealing for private or personal use, including research) and Section 52(1)(i) (reproduction of works by a teacher or pupil in the course of instruction).

Rahul Bajaj
is a practising lawyer with expertise in disability rights and IP law, and is co-founder of Mission Accessibility. He wears more hats than he can himself sometimes count
@rahul400



These exceptions have been interpreted liberally in *Rameshwari Photocopy Services*, where the Delhi High Court upheld the photocopying of course packs as fair dealing for educational purposes. Extending that reasoning, one could argue that accessing paywalled articles through shadow libraries facilitates research and instruction, especially in a country where institutional subscriptions remain scarce and prohibitively expensive. Yet, because the court refused to hear the intervenors and because Elbakyan's lawyer had no brief to argue these points, this line of reasoning was never developed.

At the very least, the court could have acknowledged that Sci-Hub represents the wrong answer to the right question: how do we ensure affordable access to research at scale? Data on publishing economics underscores this crisis. The global academic publishing market is worth billions, with profit margins touching 40% for major publishers. Subscription costs can reach $40,000 annually for a single journal, making them unaffordable even for well-resourced universities like Harvard. In India, the situation is worse, with underfunded institutions and students left to depend on informal or illicit access routes. Shadow libraries emerged as a grassroots response to this structural inequity. Blocking them without simultaneously addressing the underlying affordability gap leaves the right to education and research hollow.

Indian courts have progressively interpreted the Right to Education (Article 21-A) to extend beyond schooling and to include professional and higher education. The Supreme Court has held that financial constraints cannot justify the denial of access. In that light, blocking shadow libraries without exploring State-facilitated alternatives undermines this constitutional promise. The State could – and should – take responsibility for bulk subscriptions or open access initiatives, much like the proposed One Nation, One Subscription scheme. Until then, shadow libraries fill a gap left by policy inertia.

By classifying Sci-Hub and Sci-Net as "rogue", the court closed the door on platforms that, while unlawful, addressed an undeniable social need through an order framed as an open-and-shut piracy case. But the reality is more complex. This was a golden opportunity for the court to recognise that the real conflict is not between authors and readers, but between publishers' monopolistic interests and the public's right to knowledge. Instead, by adopting a narrow infringement lens, the court has blocked access without addressing affordability, leaving India's students and researchers in the lurch.

SANS THE SACRED

What's fair in war and vengeance?

The twists and turns in the Dharmasthala case seem to leave us with no hope of a clear resolution, with varying eyewitness accounts and ongoing cases. The one thing that decidedly does not help, though, is everyone muddying the waters with new conspiracy theories and forwards. If our epic tales teach us anything, it is that we are far beyond understanding our own circumstances, let alone complex allegations and crimes of one kind or the other.

This brings me to the story of Vali, the powerful Vanara king known for his might. There was once a rakshasa by the name of Dundubhi. Like a lot of people you may know today, Dundubhi was always itching for a fight. Once, he walked into the ocean and told it that he wished to battle it. The ocean replied that it was not up to the challenge and suggested that he try asking the Himalayas instead. And so, Dundubhi went straight to the Himalayas. "I'd like to test my strength out against yours, mighty mountain!" he announced. The mountain refused, sending him back to battle Vali instead. So Dundubhi came marching to Kishkindha, even taking on the form of a buffalo, while Vali was relaxing with his queens and some wine. Vali rushed out, charging at the buffalo, which was disturbing the peace, and flung him far away, killing him. You might think it was rather idiotic of Dundubhi to get himself killed, but Vali still got into trouble. The carcass of Dundubhi ended up falling in the sage Matanga's hermitage. Matanga was furious at the defilement that Vali caused, and cursed him to die if he ever set foot in the hermitage.

This would all be fine – all Vali had to do was to stay away from the hermitage. But Dundubhi had a son, Mayavi, who challenged Vali to battle to avenge his father's death. Clearly, he had learnt no lessons about peace. Vali had also learnt no lessons about being rash and chased Mayavi into a cave. Vali's brother, Sugriva, accompanied him to the cave, where Vali instructed him to guard the cave. Vali and Mayavi fought for days, then weeks, then months, until over a year passed, when Sugriva heard an agonised cry that sounded like his brother, and saw blood gush out of the cave. He decided that Vali must be dead and to safeguard the kingdom from Mayavi, closed the mouth of the cave with a rock. Then he returned and took over the kingdom, as well as Vali's wife. Meanwhile, Vali had actually killed Mayavi and tried to exit the cave, only to find it blocked. Finally, Vali managed to kick the rock blocking the entrance and came out, only to find Sugriva ruling the kingdom. He was furious with Sugriva, and Sugriva made a quick escape to the mountains near Matanga's hermitage, where Vali would not dare to look for him.

Anusha S Rao
is the author of *How to Love in Sanskrit* and likes writing new things about very old things
@AnushaSRao2

Then, Sugriva struck up a friendship with Rama, who needed help locating Sita, and in exchange for this favour, Rama agreed to kill Vali. When Sugriva called Vali out for battle, Vali was warned that Sugriva had powerful friends now, but he believed that Rama would not intervene in the battle since he had not wronged him in any way. But as we know, Rama killed Vali. What does this have to do with anything?

There is an interesting legend that points to a parallel. Sugriva is the son of Surya, the sun god, in the *Ramayana*. Karna is the son of Surya in the *Mahabharata*. Vali is the son of Indra in the *Ramayana*, and Arjuna is the son of Indra in the *Mahabharata*. Rama, Vishnu incarnate, helps Sugriva kill Vali. Then, as Krishna, he helps Arjuna kill Karna, the secret firstborn of Kunti, and Arjuna's older brother. Was it unfair to Karna to have to die? Well, which story should we decide based on? The one where Karna was abandoned and ridiculed all his life, and killed at a vulnerable moment by breaking the rules of war? The one where Karna insulted Draupadi? Or the one where he, as Sugriva, conspired to kill Vali?

If you're unsure, as am I, it is a good thing that we don't claim to know the absolute truth about the latest political controversy based on watching a few angry news anchors every day, is it not?

DHARMA

Were there Brahmins in South India 2,000 years ago?

Devdutt Pattanaik
works with gods and demons who churn nectar from the ocean of Indian, Chinese, Islamic, Christian, even secular mythologies

We normally assume that Brahmins have been present in every corner of India for the last 5,000 years. But this is not true. The Vedic people lived mainly in the Ganga-Yamuna Doab about 3,000 years ago. Roughly 2,500 years ago, the Vedic practices began to be challenged by new monastic traditions that arose in the lands we now associate with Bihar and Jharkhand. This led to migrations of Brahmins to the south less than 2,000 years ago.

By the time Alexander arrived, followed by waves of Persians, Scythians, Parthians, and Kushans between 200 BC and 200 AD, North India had become fairly cosmopolitan. Highways connected the Gangetic plain with the passes of the Hindu Kush and beyond. Traders, soldiers, and scholars moved back and forth. But what was happening south of the Vindhyas?

That story is rarely told. Crossing the Vindhyas was never easy. One route was by boat down the Narmada to the Gujarat coast, and then further south along the Konkan and Malabar shores. Another was through the thick sal forests of present-day Chhattisgarh, followed by a boat trip down the Mahanadi to the eastern coast, and from there, ships could sail along the Bay of Bengal, even reaching Burma, Cambodia, Vietnam, and the Mekong Delta. Many Buddhist monks took these routes. We do not hear of Jain monks doing the ocean trips, and perhaps only a few Hindu rishis dared. Chinese chronicles around 300 AD mention a sage named Koundinya who travelled to Funan, in the Mekong Delta, and married a local Naga woman.

The *Mahabharata* contains memories of such movements. There is the tale of the rishi Dirghatama, encouraged by King Bali to father children through his queen, Sudeshna. Their offspring become rulers of Anga, Vanga, and Kalinga – regions that map onto Bihar, Bengal, and Odisha. There are also tales of Agastya migrating south and Vishrava marrying rakshasa and yaksha women. Are these just later interpolations to explain dynasties, or faint echoes of early Vedic expansions into the south?

From inscriptions, we begin to get firmer evidence. Tamil Brahmi script inscriptions dated to 200 BC refer to Jain monks. In the Nashik region, the Naneghat inscriptions of the Satavahana kings record Vedic sacrifices being performed south of the Vindhyas. These are scattered signals that Vedic practices were slowly moving beyond the Ganga basin.

In 225 BC, Ashokan edicts declared that brahmanas and shramanas were found across the land. But he does not refer to 'varna'; so, the Brahmins he mentions were probably not the Brahmin caste we know today, just a general title for priests. At his time, we find no evidence of permanent Brahmin villages, the brahmadeya grants that became a hallmark of later times.

The first clear evidence of settled Brahmin communities comes only around 300 AD. Here, we find clusters in Gujarat, reached via the Narmada, and in Odisha, reached via the Mahanadi. From these beachheads, Brahmin settlements spread steadily under the patronage of southern kings – the Pandyas, Pallavas, Cholas, Kadambas, and Chalukyas.

By about 500 AD, after the Gupta age, the migration of Brahmins to the south accelerates. Kings like Yayati Keshari of Odisha or Adi Sura of Bengal invite Brahmins from distant Kashi or Kannauj to settle in their lands. Tamil Sangam poetry of this period begins to speak of Brahmins. Familiarity with the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* grows. The great migration was underway, transforming the cultural landscape of the South. The migration is in waves. In Kerala, there is evidence of earlier migration of Purva-shikha (literally "with the tuft at the front") Brahmins who brought a different version of the *Mahabharata* around 300 AD, and the Apara-shikha (meaning "with the tuft at the back") Brahmins who brought a later version of the *Mahabharata* around 800 AD.

About 1,500 years ago, there is no doubt that Brahmin settlements were firmly established across South India. But can we say the same for 2,000 years ago? The evidence is thin. We must be careful not to project the later ubiquity of Brahmins back into the earlier centuries.

What is most striking is how the migration out of Arya-desha – the Ganga-Yamuna Doab – was not only southward into the Indian peninsula but also outward, towards Southeast Asia. Koundinya in Vietnam appears at roughly the same time as Brahmin land grants in the Deccan. It is almost as if the idea of Aryavarta itself was travelling, being carried far beyond its heartland.

Early southern temples, built after 600 AD, placed Ganga and Yamuna as guardian figures at their doorways, visual reminders of the rivers of the north. They stood as symbols of continuity, but also as markers of a great journey – the journey of Vedic ideas moving south, and sometimes sailing east, reshaping the religious map of Asia.

DECCAN HERALD
Sunday
September 14, 2025

From the Patiala necklace to cursed diamonds and trade wars, Shaifali Sandhya explores how jewellery reflects power, gender, and nationalism, and takes us behind the sparkle where strategy, seduction, and unresolved histories lie concealed

Dazzle and deceit

The French salesman had never encountered such an unusual request. Before him, a young Indian ruler demanded that he open a wooden chest crammed with newspaper scraps. After some bewilderment, he gingerly unfolded them. Out tumbled a Burmese ruby the size of a quail's egg — then another. And then, astonishingly, the 234.65-carat De Beers yellow diamond, brighter than a chandelier, lighter than an egg, rarer than a snow leopard in a backyard.

A Maharaja with big feelings

It was 1925. The young man was Bhupinder Singh, the Maharaja of Patiala. In an era thick with anti-colonial tension, he was entrusting Cartier with over 1,000 carats of his most prized stones — without even

The Patiala necklace. The original necklace went missing from the Patiala treasury and was later discovered as a damaged fragment in London in 1998. It was restored in 2008 with replicas. PIC BY AUTHOR

asking for a receipt. What emerged from the encounter was the Patiala necklace — now on display at the Cartier exhibit at London's Victoria and Albert Museum. The necklace's 2,930 diamonds, including the cushion-cut De Beers yellow diamond, dance like captured sunlight. It remains Cartier's single largest order to date.

Standing before the necklace, one sees it as less an ornament and more a refuge. It is a psychological bulwark that transformed the Maharaja's frailty into an impenetrable force.

Power and politics of jewels

Jewels are never merely decorative — they are mirrors of power, politics, and psychology.

In August 2025, the United States imposed a 50% tariff on Indian gemstones and jewellery imports, up from previous rates of 2-7%, which is expected to lead to a significant decline in trade volume.

Historically, India was an early source of diamond sourcing. It has today evolved into a hub of innovation and consumption, with Surat now accounting for over 90% of the world's diamond cutting and polishing. Jaipur's jewellery exports to the US have skyrocketed to Rs 3,200 crores annually.

As the world's second-largest jewellery market after China, India's influence reaches beyond the industry; it is both cultural and economic. The US tariffs pose a significant threat to India's $94 billion gem industry, endangering the livelihoods of approximately 5 million people and compromising national economic progress. The global jewellery market is on an explosive ascent, with sales predicted to soar from $57 billion in 2025 to nearly $100 billion by 2030, eclipsing every other luxury sector. Jewellery transcends mere accessorising; it offers one of the sharpest lenses on the luxury market's future.

To understand how jewels became a stage for national anxieties, one must return to the interwar years, when Indian royalty — long arbiters of extravagance — found their symbols of power suddenly unstable.

The 1920s marked a crisis for Indian royalty. They had long relied on luxury goods, symbols of European prestige, to stage sovereignty. But the tide of anticolonial sentiment was inverting their prestige — and no antidote could soothe their panic. When a Rolls-Royce salesman snubbed the Maharaja of Alwar, he purchased the entire fleet and converted them into garbage trucks. In this tumultuous climate, the Maharaja of Patiala — flaunting 10 wives, 180 concubines, 44 Rolls-Royces, and 1200 slain tigers — found himself exposed. His solution was reimagining his spectacular jewels. The Patiala necklace on his body embodied the pinnacle of wealth and divinity, symbolising him as a king who encompassed the cosmos and commanded the span of empires and eras.

Jewels as real stars!

Throughout cultures and centuries, jewellery has been a platform for political expression. For instance, in March 2024, India's wealthiest family hosted a wedding that resembled a global summit. Helicopters circled. Dignitaries and Bollywood royalty mingled. But the real stars were the jewels. Alia Bhatt glowed in Colombian emeralds the size of eggs; Deepika Padukone shone beneath a rivière of diamonds, and Aishwarya Rai gleamed in Burmese rubies. The Patiala necklace boldly challenged colonial devaluation, while the Ambani emeralds powerfully declared India's emergence as a formidable economic and cultural force on the global stage.

What explains jewellery's lasting fascination?

The bidding wars of today echo the royal commissions of the past. In 2022, Sotheby's Hong Kong sold the Williamson Pink Star — an 11.15-carat diamond, thumb-sized and among the purest pinks ever known — for $57.7 million. What drove the price of the Pink Star was not only its intrinsic rarity but also its symbolic significance. Its older sister, the 54-carat Williamson Stone, mined from the same Tanzanian mine, famously adorned Queen Elizabeth II.

Nowhere is the faith in the aura of stone more powerful than in South Asia. In 3000 BCE, the Sumerians and Babylonians recognised stones as powerful entities, attributing them with curative properties. They used these stones as protective amulets, planetary talismans, and as symbols of divine favour. From around 1500 BCE, the Rigveda and later Ayurvedic treatises described gems as carriers of cosmic energy. Soon, the belief in the paranormal powers of stones spread to other parts of the world.

Confucian and Daoist texts referred to jade as a bridge between heaven and earth, embodying the virtues of benevolence, wisdom, and purity. Throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance (500–1600 CE), gemstones were believed to possess significant protective properties: sapphires were thought to guard against poison, garnets were believed to heal wounds, and pearls symbolised chastity.

Provenance and a journey of scars and sentiments are where a jewel's true magnetism lies, sharpening its power to seduce. "The only love affair I ever had that lasted," Elizabeth Taylor once said, "was with my Bulgari gems."

The power of myths

Myths also influence markets, and Cartier has crafted some myths as well. The Hope Diamond embodies this paradox. The blue-grey stone, mined in Kollur and now valued at up to $350 million, is infamous for its curse. Owners have been mauled, starved, beheaded, drowned, or shot. The strangest being to sport the world's most famous gemstone, however, was Evalyn Walsh McLean's poodle. The jewel was displayed on its collar at his million-dollar birthday bash.

Few myths are as politically charged as the fate of the Kohinoor. When Queen Camilla refrained from wearing the diamond — now a flashpoint in the repatriation debate and a potent emblem of colonial plunder and unresolved injustice — its absence signalled not a matter of style, but a deliberate effort to silence a reminder of empire at a time when Britain can ill afford renewed demands for restitution.

The Williamson Pink diamond was presented to Princess Elizabeth as a wedding gift. Seen here is the diamond at the centre of the Jonquil flower brooch commissioned by her after she became queen, and which she wore at the wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana. PIC BY AUTHOR

If the Hope was a myth passed down through inheritance, Maria Felix, famed to be "the most beautiful face in the history of Mexican cinema", created her own myth. In 1975, she arrived at Cartier's Paris boutique carrying a live crocodile, insisting that the jeweller design a piece inspired by the reptile. Cartier responded with the Crocodile necklace, a stunning masterpiece featuring two articulated crocodiles joined at the tail — one adorned with emeralds and rubies, the other with yellow diamonds and emeralds.

Reptiles symbolise libido and transformation. By encircling her throat with a serpent, Félix illustrated her fragility and invulnerability, channelling her psyche as both dangerous and dazzling. She was saying symbolically: "Even where I could be most destroyed, I am invincible." Through this creation, Cartier did more than set stones — it immortalised a persona.

This is the essence of luxury: myth creates a sense of timelessness. Owning such a jewel means stepping into a story, becoming part of a lineage. Myth elevates jewellery to a symbol — and we crave objects that promise more than their physical presence. In light of unresolved histories and psychologies, wearers have the opportunity to resolve or rewrite their narratives. The question truly being posed is: Is the crocodile representative of the woman, or is the woman somehow reptilian?

Jewellery's primary buyers

In luxury's language, gender writes its own grammar, and brands have long tailored their storytelling to gendered desires. Women are jewellery's primary buyers, often tethered to rituals of marriage, inheritance, and memory. Increasingly, they are buying for themselves — not as gifts received, but as declarations of agency. Men, conversely, channel their desire for permanence into watches and cars. A watch's tick is a promise of fidelity, an heirloom against entropy.

Cars deepen the metaphor. Beneath their claims of torque and horsepower lies undeniable vulnerability: while the car stands as a fortress against betrayal, it simultaneously hums with uncertainty. Men disguise intimacy as machinery; women display it openly in diamonds. Both are love stories — only one admits it.

Maharajas to millennials

Many global brands advertise jewellery in the language of intimacy and romance, while some appeal to men through conquest and performance. Both, in the end, sell permanence — the only difference lies in the rhetoric that frames it. In an age dominated by algorithms and digital goods, the appeal of jewellery may seem outdated. But when a young professional in Shanghai invests in a Cartier ring, they are connecting themselves to a lineage that spans maharajas and queens.

Jewellery's interplay between heritage and modernity is most evident in India. Many domestic brands position jewellery as part of family rituals and a means of cultural continuity. Global brands market jewellery as an entry into an exclusive international community. Both are successful, highlighting jewellery's role in identity and belonging. The contemporary dispute between Punjabi singer Diljit Dosanjh, who sought to wear the Patiala necklace but was denied by Cartier, underscores the friction and complexity in heritage, custodianship, and corporate branding.

Diamonds are not forever?

If jewellery once served as armour for kings, today it is currency for a new class of global buyers. The clients driving the high-end jewellery market are not aristocrats but Millennials and Gen Z, who regard it more as a versatile asset — something to wear, resell, or pass on. But just as jewellery seems anchored in continuity, science has unsettled its foundations. Since 2022, lab-grown diamonds (LGDs) have disrupted the market and changed the competitive landscape. Cheaper and indistinguishable, they now dominate US sales of loose stones. By 2030, LGDs are projected to account for one-fifth of the diamond jewellery's total value. Value, whether from provenance or lab-grown sources, is defined by the authenticity of its story rather than its substance.

Luxury as leverage

India has consistently imposed some of the highest tariffs on luxury imports, which range from 12.5% to 15%, a strategic element of the Make in India initiative, aimed at fostering domestic consumption. In Mumbai, a Hermès necklace can cost nearly twice as much as in Dubai, revealing significant symbolic discrepancies and political implications. The Surat Diamond Bourse —hailed as the world's largest office complex — still struggles to fill all its empty spaces. This underscores the importance of trade diplomacy and diversification for export-driven economies.

As politics, AI, and culture wars redraw the industry, jewellery stands exposed as more than luxury — as leverage. From the radiant Patiala necklace to the breathtaking Pink Star, from the vengeful Rolls-Royces to today's contentious tariff battles, jewels have seduced, schemed, and scarred through the ages. Each gemstone tells a story of intrigue and power, leaving indelible scars on history. The famous De Beers yellow diamond, lost since 1948, reemerged at a Geneva auction but has gone quiet again, hinting at more tantalising stories when it does surface again. Our fascination with gems endures because stones anchor stories. It is the truth of an unwritten, sometimes merciless history refracting on skin.

The writer is a clinical psychologist, author and cultural storyteller with a doctorate from The University of Chicago.

PIC FOR REPRESENTATION

MIXED BAG

***'Mixed Bag' is your Sunday potpourri** — an assortment of snappy articles, engaging ideas and snackable nibbles about this and that, from here and there. Dip in!*

Greek island's fading pistachio tradition

Four farmhands whacked a pistachio tree with sticks, and ripe nuts rained down onto tarps. The bounty seemed plentiful, but the crew was unimpressed. "Few pistachios," Albanian worker Daso Shpata, 47, said under a blazing sun on Greece's Aegina island, among leafy trees bearing clusters of the red fruit and against a backdrop of chirping cicadas.

Climate change has slashed harvests. But there were other headaches too: children disinclined to continue the family business, trees replaced with holiday homes.

"The pistachio culture that we know is no longer viable," said Eleni Kypreou, owner of the orchard on Aegina. "If we want to save the trees, we need to decipher what they need... Otherwise, it'll be something for the museum," she told *AFP*.

A farmer shows a branch laden with pistachios in the Greek island of Aegina. AFP

Aegina is nowhere near the biggest pistachio producer, a distinction that goes to the United States and Iran, which produce several hundred thousand tonnes each year.

But the tourist-heavy island — an hour by ferry from Athens, escorted by seagulls prowling for food — is said to have Greece's tastiest pistachios. The "special flavour... comes from the ground, from the water. The water is a little salty," said Kypreou.

A diamond mystery sealed in a bank vault

For more than a century, the fate of the dazzling Darya-e-Noor diamond has been sealed inside a bank vault — a mystery that haunts Khawaja Naim Murad, descendant of the former princes, or Nawabs, of Dhaka. Locked away in 1908, were the family's heirlooms lost during the violence at the end of British rule in 1947?

Did they survive Bangladesh's war of independence in 1971 and the string of coups that followed, or are they still safe, dusty but untouched? Many suspect the jewels are long gone, and officials at the state-run bank hesitate to simply open the vault, fearing they'd carry the cost if it is empty.

But the cash-strapped South Asian government has now ordered a committee to unseal the vault — and Murad clings to hope. "This is not a fairytale," said Murad, 55, recounting a story passed down from his father about the giant diamond dubbed the "River of Light", the centrepiece rock of a glittering armband.

"The diamond was rectangular in shape and surrounded by more than half a dozen smaller diamonds," Murad told *AFP*. It was part of a trove of 108 treasures. According to original court documents, they include a gold-and-silver sword encrusted with diamonds, a bejewelled fez with cascading pearls, and a fabulous star brooch once owned by a French empress.

The Ahsan Manzil in Bangladesh. AFP

The nawab's riverside pink palace of Ahsan Manzil is now a government museum. Murad, a former popular film star, lives in a sprawling villa in a wealthy Dhaka suburb.

"It is one of the most famous diamonds in the world, and its history is closely associated with that of the Koh-i-Noor," the book reports, referring to the shining centrepiece of Britain's crown jewels — a gem also claimed by Afghanistan, India, Iran and Pakistan. Murad believes his uncle saw the jewels in the bank in the 1980s, but bank officials say they do not know if the vault has ever been opened.

The 1908 court papers did not specify the diamond's carat weight but valued it at 500,000 rupees — part of a hoard worth 1.8 million rupees.

By today's conversion, that equals roughly $13 million, though experts say the market value of such rare and large jewels has since sometimes soared many times higher.

AFP

FEEDBACK
Do you have a jewellery story to tell? Write to us at **dhonsunday@deccanherald.co.in**

ASTROSPEAK
Guruji Shrii Arnav

Scan the QR code to read the ***weekly horoscope***

Christopher Clarey evocatively narrates Nadal's saga of sweat, scars and triumph while also chronicling his clay-court supremacy and extraordinary grit, writes Madhu Jawali

The man who embraced THE GRIND

This combination of pictures shows Nadal holding the Mousquetaires Cup after his 14 victories at the French Open at Roland Garros. (AFP file pic)

How do you go about writing a book on an athlete whose every move, win, loss, injury and comeback has been played out under the public gaze for nearly two decades and still keep the reader engaged? The task is daunting, but then, if you have read Christopher Clarey's earlier work — The Master: The Brilliant Career of Roger Federer — you'd know that it can indeed be pulled off if you remain faithful to the essence of your subject. Clarey, who has had a ringside view of tennis for years, has attempted something equally arduous for the second time. And his performance leaves little to complain about.

THE WARRIOR
Christopher Clarey
John Murray, pp 368, Rs 799

The Warrior: Rafael Nadal and His Kingdom of Clay is Clarey's ode to the Spanish great, and he couldn't have thought of a better title for the book on a person whose legacy is defined more by his tenacity than his talent; remembered more for persistence than for strokes of genius. That doesn't mean Nadal's talent was inferior to any. But when ability and attitude come together in one player, what you get is Rafael Nadal. His game may have fallen short of the aesthetics that Federer oozed. His game may not have carried the almost-robotic efficiency of Novak Djokovic's. But it was potent enough to yield him 22 Grand Slams — second most behind Djokovic's tally of 24.

While Nadal's game was good enough to fetch eight more Slams across three other majors and on two different surfaces, he was immortalised by his domination of the Rolland Garros, illustrated by his astonishing 14 titles on the red surface. And much of Clarey's latest work on Nadal revolves around the Spaniard's mastery of the clay, physically the most demanding of tennis surfaces. And somewhere along the way, you feel Nadal gets pigeonholed as more of a clay-court specialist, even if the author doesn't intend to do so. After all, his eight titles across Wimbledon, US Open and Australian Open are as many as bona fide greats like Andre Agassi and Ivan Lendl managed!

That said, it's undeniable that on clay, Nadal was far superior to Federer and Djokovic than they were to Nadal on their favoured turfs — grass and synthetic. It was as if Nadal's speed, stamina and flexibility achieved a perfect harmony when confronted with the red surface.

"Mere speed is not enough," observes Clarey. "You need to perfect the choreography, and Nadal started and stopped with both precision and pure power," adds Clarey, nailing the essence of Nadal's game on clay.

Federer, while speaking to Clarey, captures Nadal's greatness in Paris the best. "His movement on clay, it's just better than the rest. Because he has an open stance on both sides, it's like he's playing two forehands from the baseline. I can't do that, so I lose a meter or two here and there. So, he's got a huge advantage in that aspect. I don't know how he grew up doing that, but it's definitely very difficult."

Ironically enough, Wimbledon was his most favourite Slam — the grass-court major where Nadal struggled the most but still managed to win twice, including the 2008 final where he beat Federer in a near five-hour epic; a match where quality and drama competed with each other for attention and continues to be considered the greatest of all time.

If you have read Clarey's previous book on Federer (The Master...), you will be familiar with his attention to detail. In his pursuit of the minutest information, he meets a cross-section of people — those who were instrumental in shaping Nadal's career as well as those whose association with him was fleeting but illuminating. The net result is a 360-degree view of one of sport's most compelling figures.

If Federer gives insights about his superiority on clay, Mats Wilander is astonished by his feat in Paris, and if Giles Simon raves about his humility, Jim Courier reminds us about his equanimity in both defeats and losses. (Trivia: Nadal has never broken a racquet in his pro career.)

"Rafael Nadal's tennis had a way of making grown men cry," Clarey writes, before recounting Courier's emotional take. "...It's hard not to break a racquet. The guy has never broken a racquet. Because it's hard. It's emotional."

That's indeed astonishing because if you had a career as long as Nadal did with all those expectations and pressures, high and lows, it's hard not to lose your composure. Even Federer, the poster boy for composure, has had his own on-court meltdowns, even if occasionally.

Clarey credits much of Nadal's ability to stay calm under the harshest glare to his uncle and coach, Toni. A modest player himself, Toni found his true calling in coaching, and his nephew remains the most shining embodiment of his philosophy.

While narrating Nadal's tale of grit and greatness, Clarey brings alive the Big 3's on-court rivalry that defined an era and elevated the game to never-before-seen heights. You learn the history of the French Open, about his rituals and about his barren run, which was marked by career-threatening injuries and frustrating losses while testing his certified resilience.

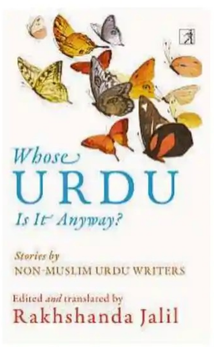
To sum it up, The Warrior isn't just about Nadal, the champion. It's about Nadal the fighter, the man who embraced the grind and who carried himself with humility through dizzying highs and crippling lows.

A language that refuses to be caged

This collection of stories argues that Urdu, originating from a blend of languages, is a shared heritage that surpasses boundaries created by religion, writes Sudhirendar Sharma

Renu Behl, author of a story on gender discrimination, Draupadi Has Woken Up, reminds the reader that Urdu was and continues to be the language of the land of the five rivers. This is one of the 16 short stories written by non-Muslims in the volume Whose Urdu Is It Anyway, collated to support the argument that religion is not connected to language. And if language gets yoked to a religion, in this case, Urdu with Muslims, it does no good to either the language or the religion.

Ever since Urdu was adopted as the official language of Pakistan, it has been considered the language of Muslims, or to be more precise, the language of Indian Muslims. However, this is erroneous because Urdu was born of the cultural hybridisation in the Indian subcontinent during the 18th century. What we know as Urdu today has heavy Turkish, Arabic, and Persian influences, all of which arrived in the country through waves of trade and conquests. Eventually, Urdu became the preferred language of the masses.



WHOSE URDU IS IT ANYWAY?
Rakhshanda Jalil
S&S, pp 180, Rs 499

However, identifying Urdu with Muslims has political implications, although there is not much empirical evidence in favour of this relationship. Can language belong to a religion, or can a geographical claim be laid over a language? Literary historian Rakhshanda Jalil explores the question through 16 carefully selected Urdu short stories by non-Muslim writers to help bust stereotypes and misconceptions. Any attempt at identifying a language with religion is fraught with a cruel denial of heritage, she argues.

Stories by well-known non-Muslim writers, to name a few, like Krishan Chander, Rajinder Singh Bedi, Kanhaiyalal Kapoor, Devendar Issar, Ramanand Sagar, and Gulzar, speak of the glorious diversity of issues the language has tackled, in different tones and tenors. The idea of objectively selecting these stories affirms the 'idea of India', showcasing that Urdu as a language is alive and that it does not belong to Muslims only. Apart from these short stories, there is a vast treasure of Urdu literature that can still reach the nooks and crannies of popular imagination.

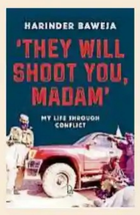
Whose Urdu Is It Anyway? is a loaded query on a hybrid language that borrowed words from many languages — mostly from Persian — and became the elite lingua franca of medieval India. The evolution of 'rekhta' (hybrid) acknowledges Urdu as a hybrid language and seeks to popularise it. Interestingly, such is the trend that more people today pursue it orally than those who may choose to study it as written language. Urdu is growing irrespective of its religious identity, for it locates itself in the heart of Hindustan.

Do a handful of stories address the question of so-called proprietorship over the language? Rakhshanda Jalil has tried to be objective in selecting stories that remain representative of the time and the people. Most narratives focus on those who live on the margins of public consciousness, gently eke out a living, and are set in a time when gender discrimination was more of a norm than an exception. The stories are located in the early years after Independence, when a new kind of nativism was being talked about, and when the fledgling nation was grappling with issues of identity and nationhood. It reminds us starkly of the present times when a similar surge of hyper-nationalism is being witnessed.

The collection of short stories by non-Muslim writers represents the region to which they belong, and not their religion. That's why Muslims in Kerala speak Malayalam, whereas those in Bengal feel at home in Bengali. Not without reason, Urdu is and continues to be the language in Punjab. As a region and not as a state. That is why Urdu as a language is not confined to a religion. 'It belongs to whoever is willing to embrace it and, in their capable hands, it is willing to be moulded like pliable clay.'

Rakhshanda Jalil expects the reader to take her time for the essence of these stories to sink in. After all, Urdu itself took its own sweet time to evolve, did it not!

BOOKRACK

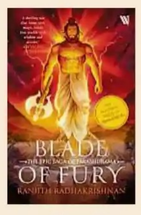


'THEY WILL SHOOT YOU, MADAM'
Harinder Baweja
Roli, pp 400, Rs 895
Award-winning journalist Harinder Baweja has ventured deep into conflict zones, bringing to light stories from difficult terrains. The book reflects her dispatches from ground zero and captures the psychology of violence.

DAYS AT THE TORUNKA CAFE
Satoshi Yagisawa
HarperCollins, pp 220, Rs 399
From the author of the Morisaki Bookshop novels comes a charming and poignant story set in a quiet Tokyo café where customers find unexpected connections and experience everyday miracles.

WILD REVERENCE
Rebecca Ross
HarperCollins, pp 400, Rs 699
Born to the firelit domain of the underworld, Matilda is the youngest goddess of her clan, blessed with humble messenger magic. But in a land where gods kill each other for magic, Matilda must come of age sooner than most.

STILL BOBBI
Bobbi Brown
Bloomsbury, pp 320, Rs 699
Legendary entrepreneur Bobbi Brown shares her personal story of invention and reinvention in her captivating first memoir. Bobbi's memoir provides the tools to pursue your dreams with clarity and confidence.



BLADE OF FURY
Ranjith Radhakrishnan
Westland, pp 352, Rs 499
The epic saga of Parashurama continues as adventure seeks him out, paranormal forces hunt him, and he seeks to bring the mystical to life. The sixth avatar of Mahavishnu traverses sacred landscapes in a tale that bridges Vedic spirituality and Tantra.

INTERVIEW

Cultural bridges built of words

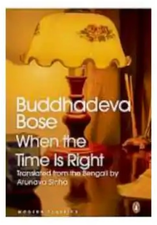
One of India's most celebrated translators, Arunava Sinha is often credited with carrying Bengali literature across borders with lyrical precision. From classics by Buddhadeva Bose to contemporary voices, his translations have won many awards and international acclaim, establishing him as a bridge between languages, cultures and imaginations. *Excerpts from an interview.*

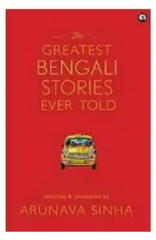
Translation is all about artful listening and is the only way we can even begin to understand India's cultural richness, translator Arunava Sinha tells Ashutosh Thakur

Arunava Sinha. PIC COURTESY: ALEPH

Do you remember the moment when translation became more than just a linguistic exercise, when it felt like an artistic calling?

I never really did it as a linguistic exercise, except maybe once or twice, just to see what it felt like. But the moment I started translating full-length stories, it was very much an artistic enterprise. That began in Kolkata, after I graduated. We had started a city magazine, and we used to publish one translated short story every month. So that's when it really began for me.





Sankar's Chowringhee was the first translation that brought you into the literary spotlight. What made that book your starting point, and how did it shape your sensibility as a translator?

Chowringhee was my first full-length translation, and I did it simply because the author, Sankar, asked me to, after I had translated one of his short stories. Honestly, I knew nothing about translating a novel. I'd only worked on short stories till then. I just went ahead and did it, in my spare time, after office hours, on the office computer. And that's really when I realised that translation is its own thing; it's a distinct, deeply satisfying activity.

Interestingly, the book was published only about 14 or 15 years later. In the meantime, I didn't do any translation; I was just working as a journalist, living a regular life. But when Chowringhee finally came out, it changed everything for me. It told me this was something I could actually do. So in that sense, I owe everything to Chowringhee.

What's your strategy for balancing faithfulness to language with resonance for a contemporary reader?

I don't worry much about the contemporary reader. I'm contemporary myself, so my writing naturally reflects that.

As a translator, the real task is balancing registers, voices, and dialects. It starts with closely listening to the original text, not just reading it. You aim to create a version in the target language that corresponds, not copies. But when it comes to register and voice, it's not just about reading; you must listen. And it's that act of listening that allows you to reproduce voices, textures, and tonalities. You use your ear as much as your eyes.

Which book or passage has challenged you the most, and perhaps, changed you in the process?

Translating Khwabnama by Akhtaruzzaman Elias was particularly tough; it's layered and intense. Dozakhnama by Rabisankar Bal was also demanding, filled with passion that's hard to convey in English. Then came Sasthipada Chattopadhyay's Duryodhaner Nani, written in highly Sanskritised Bengali; just deciphering it was a task. But really, every book is a new challenge because each voice is unique and capturing that faithfully is the translator's real work.

In a multilingual country like India, what role do you think translation can, and must, play in the years ahead?

Translation is the single most crucial tool for literature in a country like India. Most of us can read only one or two languages, so without translation, we'd miss out on each other's stories entirely. It's through translation that we can begin to understand India in its full literary richness, by reading voices from across regions and languages. That's the only way to build a truly shared cultural space.

How do you see the evolving role of technology, especially AI, in the world of literary translation?

I'm not sure yet. So far, AI hasn't been very useful for literary translation; it works better for manuals, documents, or real-time interpretation. Literary translation demands a kind of nuance AI hasn't mastered. Will it get there? Maybe. I'm open to exploring it, possibly through a research program.

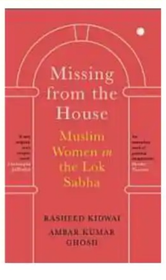
What inspired your transition from translator to publisher with Chowringhee Press?

I've long believed in the need for a translation-focused press, one that isn't burdened by the pressure to be commercially successful or profit-driven, which often shapes the choices of big publishers. The idea is to create a low-cost, low-investment translator-led collective, where translators can bring in their own books and retain the full proceeds from sales. It's a different model, where there's no reliance on traditional distribution or bookstores. We're going direct to readers, and I'm hoping we can generate enough interest.

READ OF THE WEEK

They broke barriers to build democracy. Muslim women in Indian politics are outliers, their lives and journeys shaped by patriarchy, religious orthodoxy and systemic exclusion. Yet, against formidable odds, 18 have made it to the Lok Sabha since 1952.

Missing from the House tells their stories for the first time. Through the lives of these trailblazing parliamentarians, this book uncovers the battles they fought, not only to win elections but also to challenge a political system designed to keep them out. From political dynasts like Akbar Jahan Abdullah, Abida Ahmed and Mehbooba Mufti, to grassroots activists like the Gandhian Zohraben Chavda, doctor-politician Mamtaz Sanghamita and actor-turned-MP Nusrat Jahan, their journeys span privilege and struggle, silence and defiance. Urgent and deeply insightful, Missing from the House is a powerful account of political agency, representation and the unyielding fight to be seen and heard in Indian democracy. Rasheed Kidwai is a journalist, author, columnist and political analyst. A former associate editor of *The Telegraph*, Kidwai tracks government, politics, community affairs and Hindi cinema. Ambar Kumar Ghosh is a political scientist who works on diverse areas, including political leadership and institutions, welfare politics, constitutionalism, women's and youth political participation, among others.



Heritage plated

Chefs, restaurateurs, and food historians are reviving forgotten recipes across India, blending nostalgia with innovation to showcase authentic regional flavours and heritage, writes Garima Verma

Isn't it fascinating how food often holds the key to nostalgia? The kitchens of our grandparents, where every dish carried a story, remain etched in memory. While global cuisines have long captivated Indian diners, there is now a noticeable shift back to our culinary roots.

This revival is evident in the recent opening of Ikk Panjab by Rajan and Deepika Sethi in Chandigarh and Gurugram. With an established presence in Delhi, their new spaces aim to do more than serve Punjabi food — it's about reclaiming personal heritage. Inspired by Rajan's maternal grandfather, a soldier from Punjab, the restaurant aims to dispel misconceptions surrounding popular Punjabi staples, such as butter chicken and *dal makhani*.

Mathew Verghese

Ebaani Tewari

Chef Kunwar Hemendra Singh

Rajan Sethi

Deepika Sethi

"Growing up, we never ate *dal makhani* at home. It was always *maah ki daal*, made without butter or cream," says Rajan. His mission at Ikk Panjab is simple: to remind diners that what is widely considered Punjabi cuisine is only part of the story. "Much of what people eat today comes from Mughal influences or migrant cultures. True Punjabi food remains largely unexplored," he adds.

Breaking stereotypes

Chef Ebaani Tewari echoes this sentiment when discussing regional cuisine. She recalls how South Indian cuisine was long pigeonholed as strictly vegetarian or limited to *idlis* and *dosas*. At her Mumbai-based restaurant Kari Apla, which she runs with colleague Mathew Verghese, Ebaani blends regional flavours into a modern dining experience.

According to her, India's renewed interest in its culinary diversity has reshaped the narrative. Diners in the north are learning to distinguish between Udupi, Chettinad, and Hyderabadi cuisines, while in the south, Rajasthan is being explored beyond its famous *daal-bati churma* and *laal maas*.

"There's a new wave of people seeking food that connects them to culture and tradition," says Stanzin Jigmed Namgyal, young scion of Ladakh's 400-year-old Namgyal dynasty. Namgyal is introducing Ladakhi dishes such as *tangthur* (a buttermilk-based vegetable stew) and *yarkhandi pulao* (a rich mutton *pulao* with dried fruits) to the broader Indian audience. He credits social media with amplifying this resurgence, as young Ladakhis proudly share their food heritage online.

A traditional thali by Chef Kunwar Hemendra Singh showcasing flavours of Mewar, Marwar, and beyond.

New dishes at Loya, Taj Palace New Delhi, reflect the country's unique regional flavours.

Banana cake & filter coffee ice cream at Kari Apla.

Indian Accent's Banarasi nimona with cauliflower makhan malai.

Sialkot masala raan at Ikk Panjab.

Yarkhandi Pulao from Ladakh is a delicacy with origins tracing back to the Silk Route.

Kafuli at Loya is a rustic spinach dish, cooked in an iron pot.

From family kitchens to the fore

Chefs are increasingly drawing on home kitchens and forgotten recipes to revive the flavours of yesteryear. At The Oberoi, New Delhi, Executive Chef Manish Sharma has reintroduced traditional cooking tools like the *sil batta* (grinding stone) and *imam dasta* (mortar and pestle) to extract true Dehlavi flavours. Dishes like *silbatte ke shammi* — lamb and lentil *kebabs* pounded by hand — celebrate this return to authenticity.

In Old Delhi, food historian and chef Osama Jalali is researching and reviving lost Mughlai and Nawabi recipes. His efforts to bring back Rampuri royal dishes such as *taar gosht* (mutton slow-cooked in its own juices) and *gosht halwa* (a sweet-savoury meat pudding) have been widely praised. For Ebaani, inspiration also comes from childhood. Drawing on her family's roots in Goa, Maharashtra, and Uttar Pradesh, she creates dishes like *Madurai Mutton Cutlet*, recalling childhood trips to Chennai, and a playful *Banana Bread with Filter Coffee Ice Cream*, inspired by Kerala's train station snack stalls that Verghese frequented. Each plate, she says, carries "a personal memory, retold for today's diners." At Ikk Panjab, Rajan continues his quest to rediscover recipes from Punjab's undivided past. "There are no cookbooks to reference, and most recipes were never written down," he explains. His menu features little-known dishes such as *Kotkapura ka Aata Chicken* (a flour-coated chicken preparation) and *Karachi Koila Kadhai* (chicken smoked on hot coal) — delicacies even many Punjabis are unaware of. The restaurant also borrows from royal kitchens, offering *Patiala Shahi Tandoori Bater* (quail) and the acclaimed *Gosht Beliram*, named after Maharaja Ranjit Singh's personal chef.

A taste of nostalgia

The revival of traditional food isn't limited to regional specialities. At Indian Accent, Chef Shantanu Mehrotra incorporates childhood memories into his menu, such as *Chicken Seekh with Rice* and *Prune-Mulberry Korma*. "The mulberries used in this dish come from the tree right here in the compound," he says, emphasising the connection between food, memory, and place. Nostalgia runs through his offerings, which also include *Kala Khatta*, *Solkadhi*, and *Narthangai* (pickled citron).

At Loya, Taj Palace, Grand Master Chef Rajesh Wadhwa is introducing forgotten recipes such as *Kafuli* (a slow-cooked spinach dish from Uttarakhand) and *Faridkot Meat Curry*, a rustic mutton curry from Punjab. "These dishes represent the land and its people. It's a privilege to bring them back to life with authenticity," he says. In Rajasthan, Chef Kunwar Hemendra Singh of Bhainsrorgarh is reviving recipes once served at royal Rajputana feasts. His curated *thalis* celebrate the culinary heritage of Mewar, Marwar, and Malwa, with highlights such as *Dal Bidwal* (a lentil soup from Bidwal) and *Hari Mirch ka Maas* (a fiery mutton dish from Bhainsrorgarh's royal kitchens).

The future of Indian cuisine

As chefs, restaurateurs, and culinary historians bring back forgotten recipes, regional Indian cuisines are becoming far more than a passing trend — they are entering the mainstream. The division of Indian cuisine into stereotypes is gradually erasing, believes Ebaani. From Punjab to Ladakh, kitchens across the country are unveiling the true diversity of Indian food, blending nostalgia with innovation.

With each dish, these chefs are not only reviving history but also writing a new narrative for the future of Indian cuisine. As diners increasingly seek food that connects them to tradition, this era of rediscovery is only set to grow stronger.

Wellness

Zen hormones

From fertility to mood, hormones shape women's health, and yoga offers a timeless, holistic way to restore inner balance, writes Akshar

In today's fast-paced world, women are increasingly struggling with hormonal imbalances triggered by stress, sedentary routines, processed diets, environmental toxins, and disrupted sleep cycles. Hormones govern everything from menstruation and fertility to mood, metabolism, and energy levels, making hormonal health central to overall well-being.

While modern medicine offers diagnostics and symptom-based treatments, most women are turning to ancient practices such as yoga to restore equilibrium naturally. Rooted in thousands of years of wisdom, hormonal balance yoga is emerging as a powerful tool to regulate the endocrine system, reduce stress, and align the body with its innate rhythms.

Understanding hormonal imbalance

The endocrine system is a finely tuned network of glands — including the pituitary, thyroid, adrenal, ovaries, and pancreas — that secrete hormones regulating essential functions.

When this system is disrupted, it can lead to conditions such as Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS), thyroid dysfunction, insulin resistance, adrenal fatigue, and irregular menstrual cycles. Emotional distress, anxiety, and burnout often follow, creating a cycle that further destabilises hormonal health.

How yoga supports hormonal harmony

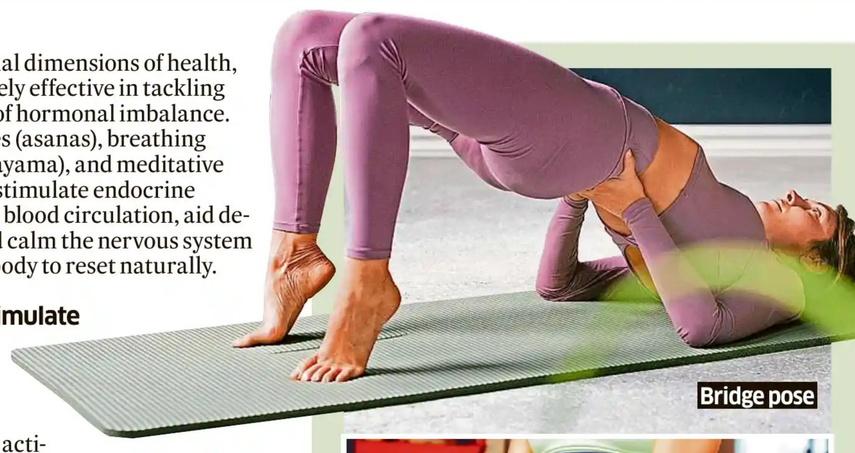
Yoga's integrative approach addresses the physical, mental, and emotional dimensions of health, making it uniquely effective in tackling the root causes of hormonal imbalance. Specific postures (asanas), breathing practices (pranayama), and meditative techniques can stimulate endocrine glands, improve blood circulation, aid detoxification, and calm the nervous system — allowing the body to reset naturally.

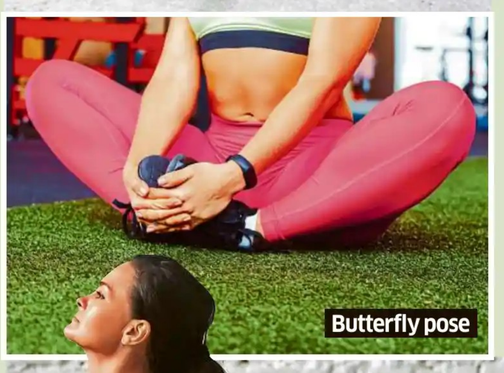
Asanas that stimulate glandular function

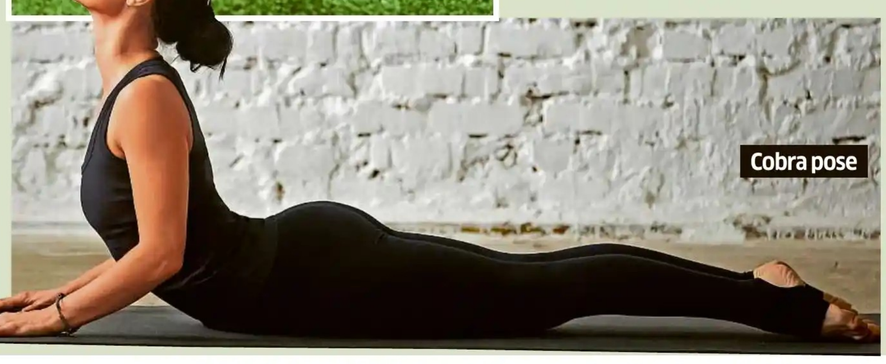
Gentle, restorative poses and targeted asanas activate endocrine glands and optimise their function:

- **Supported Bridge pose (Setu Bandhasana):** Stimulates the thyroid, opens the chest and pelvis, and eases stress and anxiety.
- **Cobra pose (Bhujangasana):** Activates the adrenal glands and reduces fatigue — especially useful for women experiencing burnout or adrenal insufficiency.
- **Butterfly pose (Baddha Konasana):** Opens the pelvic area, supports reproductive organs, and benefits menstrual health and fertility.
- **Child's pose (Balasana):** Soothes the nervous system, massages abdominal organs, and reduces stress-driven hormonal fluctuations.

Consistency with these postures helps regulate menstrual cycles, support fertility, and enhance resilience to stress.


Bridge pose


Butterfly pose


Cobra pose

Top asanas for hormonal balance

- **Supported Bridge pose (Setu Bandhasana):** Boosts thyroid and relieves stress
- **Cobra pose (Bhujangasana):** Stimulates adrenals, reduces fatigue
- **Butterfly pose (Baddha Konasana):** Supports reproductive health and fertility
- **Child's pose (Balasana):** Soothes the nervous system, calms stress hormones

Breathwork for balance

- **Nadi Shodhana:** Clears mind, steadies mood swings
- **Bhramari:** Lowers cortisol, aids sleep and emotional stability
- **Ujjayi:** Boosts metabolism, eases restless thoughts

Meditation practices

- **Yoga Nidra:** Deep rest, adrenal recovery
- **Chakra meditation:** Balances reproductive and thyroid energy

DID YOU KNOW?

- Hormonal imbalances can trigger PCOS, thyroid issues, insulin resistance, and adrenal fatigue.
- Stress and poor sleep are among the biggest hormone disruptors for women.
- Yoga postures can gently stimulate the thyroid, ovaries, pancreas, and adrenal glands.
- Breathwork like Bhramari reduces cortisol and improves melatonin production for better sleep.
- Consistent yoga practice helps regulate menstrual cycles and supports fertility.
- Emotional instability often mirrors hormonal fluctuations – meditation helps break this cycle.
- Aligning routines with natural rhythms (sunrise, sunset, moon phases) supports healthier hormone function.

Pranayama for nervous system regulation

Chronic stress is one of the greatest disruptors of hormonal health. Breathwork calms the mind and resets the autonomic nervous system, which is deeply tied to endocrine function.

- **Nadi Shodhana (Alternate nostril breathing):** Balances sympathetic and parasympathetic activity, improves mental clarity, and steadies mood swings.
- **Bhramari (Humming bee breath):** Lowers cortisol, supports pituitary and pineal health, and regulates melatonin to boost sleep and emotional stability.
- **Ujjayi (Oceanic breath):** Builds inner heat, enhances metabolism, and steadies erratic thoughts to help maintain hormonal homoeostasis.

Meditation & mindfulness

Hormonal fluctuations often mirror emotional turbulence. Meditation cultivates awareness and resilience, reducing the impact of stress on the body.

- **Yoga Nidra (Yogic sleep):** A guided relaxation that places the body in deep rest while the mind remains alert — reducing fatigue and aiding adrenal recovery.
- **Chakra meditation:** Balancing energy centres, particularly the sacral (Swadhisthana) and throat (Vishuddha) chakras, supports reproductive and thyroid health.

Creating rhythmic living with yoga

One of yoga's subtler but profound benefits is its ability to restore the body's natural rhythms.

Aligning with cycles of sunrise, sunset, and moon phases creates consistency — vital for hormonal stability. Morning practices such as Surya Namaskar (Sun salutations) energise the system, while evening lunar flows support rest and restoration. This entrainment helps regulate both circadian and infradian rhythms.

The holistic edge

Unlike treatments that target symptoms in isolation, yoga addresses the whole being. Its non-invasive, restorative approach reconnects women with their body's intuitive intelligence.

Over time, regular practice can improve menstrual health, stabilise mood, enhance fertility, balance thyroid function, and foster a deep sense of calm.

Integrating hormonal balance yoga into daily life allows women to shift from hormonal chaos to hormonal coherence — naturally, gracefully, and sustainably.

In a world dominated by quick fixes, yoga offers not just relief but a timeless pathway to self-awareness, empowerment, and inner harmony.

(The author is a lifestyle coach & Yoga-preneur.)

Nestled in the Jura, St-Ursanne blends medieval charm, scenic views, and Swiss stillness, offering travellers a hidden gem away from crowds, writes Ashwin Rajagopalan

St-Ursanne: Switzerland's hidden medieval pearl

It's one of the many ironies of the Instagram age. We make our travel discoveries on social media platforms, and yet, when we finally arrive at our chosen destination, we hope to steer clear of tourists. In a country where almost every corner can turn into a postcard, is it still possible to find a true hidden gem?

In 2023, the UN World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) selected St-Ursanne in Switzerland among 54 villages worldwide (the list also included Dhordo in Gujarat's Kutch region) in its annual Best Tourism Villages awards. This recognition put the spotlight on one of Switzerland's lesser-known medieval treasures, affectionately called the Pearl of the Jura. The Jura canton, Switzerland's youngest among its 26 cantons, shares its border with France and remains a relatively undiscovered region.

The story of St-Ursanne is deeply entwined with the legacy of Saint Ursicinus, an Irish missionary and hermit who established a monastery here in the 7th century. Today, traces of that spiritual heritage linger in its cobbled streets, churches, and cloisters.

Like many Swiss towns and villages, my St-Ursanne experience began at its tiny railway station. Perched above the village, the station offers a panoramic view as you descend towards the medieval centre, as though stepping back in time. The village is about two hours from Zurich by train, making it an easy day trip from Switzerland's largest city.

There are only three access points to St-Ursanne — its fortified gates — along with the Saint-Jean Népomucène bridge, the village's most photographed landmark. When I visited, the village was gearing up for Les Médiévales, one of Switzerland's most beloved medieval festivals held every other July. Costumes, stalls, and reenactments take visitors back to the Middle Ages. Yet I quickly realised that you don't need a festival to feel that connection. All it takes is a special key.

Saint-Jean Népomucène Bridge, St-Ursanne's most photographed spot.

A bird's-eye view of St-Ursanne in Switzerland.

Quick guide

Getting there: Around 2 hrs by train from Zurich; the station sits above the village with a panoramic approach.

Must-see: Collegiate Church & cloister, Saint-Jean Népomucène bridge, fortified gates.

Don't miss: The "Circuit Secret" – a digital key unlocking hidden medieval treasures, devised by Lord of the Rings illustrator John Howe.

Festival vibe: Les Médiévales (July, every other year) – streets transform into a living medieval fair.

Not a key to one of the ancient gates, but a digital key to the St-Ursanne Circuit Secret, a trail of medieval treasures and emblematic spots. This imaginative project was created by the illustrator of *Lord of the Rings*, John Howe, in collaboration with regional artists, designers, and engineers. The circuit led me to the Collegiate Church, one of St-Ursanne's most iconic landmarks, which combines Romanesque and Gothic elements. Its cloister, dating back to the 10th century, is a reminder of the village's deep spiritual past.

St Ursanne's Medieval old town.

For travellers like me who tend to over-pack itineraries, St-Ursanne is a refreshing detour. The village can be explored in just a few hours, its cobbled streets perfect for strolls and spontaneous photographs. Climb a few flights of stairs to one of the vantage points, and you're rewarded with 360-degree views of the village and the wooded Jura hills that surround it.

If you're itching for more, hop on a train to nearby towns. I headed to Neuchâtel, about an hour away, to revisit memories from over a decade ago. Located in the heart of Switzerland's Watch Valley, Neuchâtel is home to the Art and History Museum. Its prize exhibits are the famed three automata, masterpieces by 18th-century Swiss watchmakers Pierre Jacquet-Droz and his son Henri-Louis. The most remarkable of them — The Scribe — can write any pre-programmed text of up to 40 characters, a mechanical marvel that foreshadowed the typewriter more than a century later.

Some trivia

Highlight: Art & History Museum's 18th-century automata by Pierre & Henri-Louis Jacquet-Droz.

Lake life: Benches on the Esplanade are perfect for a slow afternoon; panoramic views await in the old town above.

Watch Valley: The region remains the beating heart of Swiss horology.

After exploring the museum, I strolled along the Esplanade by the serene Neuchâtel Lake, where benches invite you to linger for hours. For panoramic views, I climbed into the old town, past the Banneret Fountain, and up to the 12th-century castle complex that overlooks the lake. The views were worth every step.

Back in St-Ursanne, the village revealed its other charms — a handful of antique shops, craft boutiques, and cosy dining spots. One highlight was Pastaverne (a clever blend of pasta and tavern), where I tucked into a plate of home-made pasta.

For a village so small, St-Ursanne offers plenty of detours — from paragliding, hiking, and biking trails to castle ruins and the verdant Doubs Nature Park. And yet, the greatest gift it offers is stillness. A quiet getaway that oozes Swiss charm, with just the right dash of medieval magic.

Get there before more travellers discover Switzerland's Pearl of the Jura.

The Collegiate Church, Neuchatel. IMAGES COURTESY SWITZERLAND TOURISM

ADVERTORIAL

Advertorial

4 New Dream Destinations

From Milestones to New Maps: Discover These Rising Destinations

Neil Patil
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As Abhishek Bachchan's character famously said in the movie Guru: 'Sapne dekhna achi baat hai.' Dreaming is good. And today, I want to help spark a few new dreams.

At Veena World, milestones are more than numbers. They are celebrations of curiosity, courage, and that constant feeling of wandering. With over 350 tour managers and 700+ team members and Sales Partners, it feels like every single day, someone in our circle is reaching a new travel landmark. Visiting their 5th Indian state, 10th country, or even their 50th international destination.

And each time a milestone is crossed, a question follows: 'What next?' It's in these moments that new dreams begin to form. A destination you overheard in a conversation. A photo you saw online. A place that makes you pause and think, "Maybe that could be my next big trip."

As Abhishek Bachchan's character famously said in the movie Guru: "Sapne dekhna achi baat hai." Dreaming is good. And today, I want to help spark a few new dreams.

Because while we all know the classic favourites, Europe, Thailand, Dubai, there's a world of places rising quietly, inviting Indian travellers to come explore. So in this piece, let me take you to four destinations that are not yet mainstream, but are well on their way. Four new pins for your travel map. Let's begin.

Cyprus – Where Europe Meets the Middle East

Cyprus isn't usually the first name that comes up when we think of Europe. And maybe that's exactly why it should be. This island country, floating in the eastern Mediterranean, is where East and West blur beautifully. You'll find Greek temples and Byzantine churches, Turkish hammams and Venetian walls, all wrapped up in coastal towns with turquoise water and sun-drenched mountain villages.

But here's what really stood out to me: Cyprus feels both ancient and alive. You could be walking along the ruins of a Roman amphitheatre in the morning, and enjoying a breezy café lunch in a bustling modern square by afternoon. In Limassol, a city that blends beach resort vibes with cultural depth, you'll find trendy bars next to Ottoman mosques, and food that mixes halloumi and hummus with souvlaki and baklava.

It's also a place with deep mythological roots. Legend has it that Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love, was born from the sea foam off the coast of Paphos. And when you stand at Petra tou Romiou: the rock where this myth is said to have unfolded, you'll understand why that story has lasted millennia.

Cyprus is small, which makes it perfect to explore in a week. But it also feels layered, which means even in a week, it doesn't feel rushed. And now, with easier connectivity from India via hubs like Dubai and Doha, this island is slowly making its way onto Indian travel itineraries.

Sicily – The Island Where Italy Feels Even More Italian

If Italy were a movie, Sicily would be its dramatic third act. It's louder, deeper, a bit more rugged, but absolutely unforgettable. For Indian travellers who have already done the Rome–Florence–Venice trio, Sicily is the next chapter waiting to be written. And it's very different. Think less polished postcard, more raw Mediterranean heart.

You will land in Palermo or Catania and the first thing that hits you is the sense of contrast. Arab domes next to Baroque churches. Ancient Greek temples rising from wild hillsides. Colourful markets that feel like they belong in North Africa, and pasta dishes you have never seen on menus in Rome.

Sicily has seen it all. Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Normans, Spanish, French. Each left their mark, but instead of wiping out what came before, they layered over it. Which is why you get cities like Syracuse, once one of the most powerful cities in the ancient world, and valleys like Agrigento, with rows of Doric temples that rival Athens.

But Sicily isn't just about ruins and history. There's Mount Etna, one of the most active volcanoes in the world, puffing away like a sleepy dragon. There are the Aeolian Islands, like Lipari and Stromboli, which feel like the Mediterranean's best-kept secrets. And then there's the food, spicy, citrusy, full of Arabic and African influences, yet unmistakably Italian.

Malta – Small Island, Giant Stories

It's not often that a place this small has stories this big. But that's Malta for you, just a tiny dot in the Mediterranean between Sicily and North Africa, yet with a history that stretches back over 7,000 years.

For Indian travellers who love destinations like Greece or Italy but want something a little off the beaten track, Malta offers a familiar climate with completely different layers. Ancient temples older than the pyramids, medieval fortresses that guarded the seas during the Crusades, and a language that's a mix of Arabic, Italian, and English, all packed into a country smaller than Mumbai.

Walk through the narrow streets of Valletta, the country's capital and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and you will feel like you have stepped onto a movie set. That's because you have. Malta has quietly become a Hollywood favourite, with scenes from Game of Thrones, Troy, and Gladiator filmed right here.

Tunisia – Where the Sahara Meets Star Wars

Not many places can claim both ancient Roman colosseums and Tatooine from Star Wars. But Tunisia isn't like most places. Tucked along the Mediterranean coast of North Africa, Tunisia is a country of contrasts – beaches and deserts, ruins and souks, tradition and sci-fi legend. And for the Indian traveller ready to explore beyond the familiar, it's a destination that surprises at every turn.

Let's start with Star Wars. Remember Luke Skywalker's desert home on the planet Tatooine? It wasn't a set built in Hollywood, it was filmed in southern Tunisia. The town of Tataouine, in fact, inspired the planet's name. And to this day, you can visit the real-life locations where scenes from the original trilogy (and the prequels) were filmed.

But Tunisia isn't just for film buffs. Head north, and you'll find the city of Carthage: once the seat of a mighty empire that challenged ancient Rome. Explore El Djem, home to one of the best-preserved Roman amphitheatres in the world, even older than the Colosseum in Rome. Wander through Medina of Tunis, a UNESCO-listed maze of alleys, shops, and mosques that still hums with daily life.

And then there's the Sahara

Vast, golden, and cinematic, it stretches across southern Tunisia in sweeping dunes and salt flats. Indian travellers who've experienced Rajasthan's Thar Desert will find something familiar here, but also something deeply different: the colours, the silence, the scale. A night in a desert camp here, under a sky blanketed in stars, is the kind of experience that lingers long after the trip ends.

So there you have it, four places that may not always make the headlines, but quietly call out to the curious, the seasoned, and the dreaming traveller. Maybe it's time to add a new pin to the map. See you next time...

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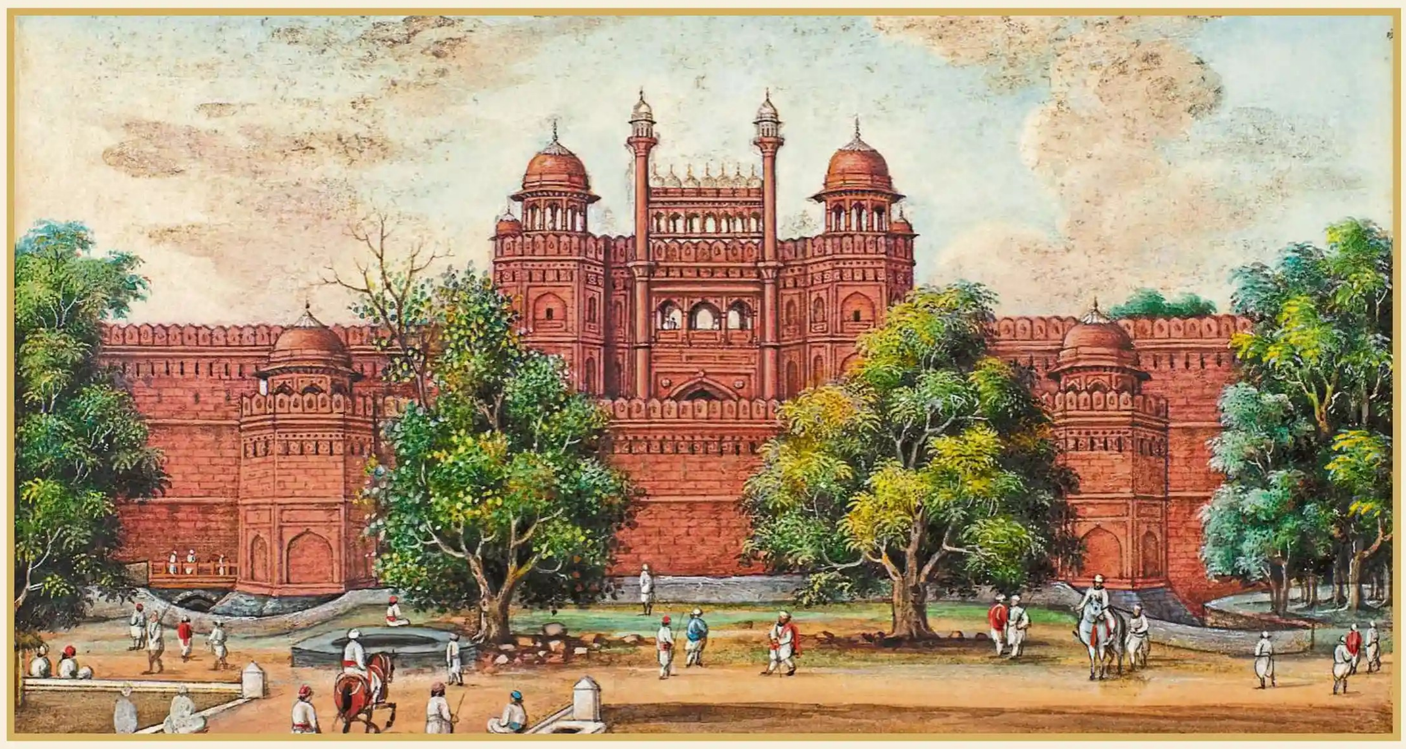


A few of the paintings of various monuments in Delhi that will be part of the exhibition at Bikaner House, New Delhi. PICS COURTESY: DAG

Chronicles in brick and brush

An ongoing art festival is looking at Delhi as a living museum, weaving art, heritage, performances and archives into layered narratives that celebrate the city, writes Shilpi Madan

Delhi is a city in constant conversation with itself. If you know how to listen carefully, it divulges whispers in a flowing narrative. In keeping with the emotion the capital city inspires, historian Swapna Liddle has curated an exhibition titled Sair-e-Delhi-Chronicles of Change, as part of the first Delhi edition of the art and heritage festival by DAG. The festival celebrates 'The City as a Museum' at Bikaner House.

Following the successful edition of the debut edition of the festival in Mumbai earlier this year and the four applause-worthy editions held in Kolkata since 2021, the festival arrives in the cultural crucible of the country — coursing through its heritage locations, dipping into personal repositories of artistes, knitting together bulwark institutions and bringing in spaces for both stellar performances and depth and dimension in art activism. The exhibition brings in a treasured

handpicked collection of paintings, prints, photographs, maps and plans that come together in unison to narrate the history of the historic city.

While the heritage festival is a rich fabric braised deeply in history, the exhibition brings in a subtle yet complex layering of the forms and structures of the city, leafing through the Sultanate and Mughal periods to Lutyens' Delhi. Volumes of precious tradition and colourful culture intersperse with the immersive experiences, sojourns on foot, and the sights and sounds of Delhi in all its splendour and sepia tones.

"This exhibition brings together an unprecedented variety of objects — paintings, prints, photographs, maps, and plans, that depict the historic sites of Delhi. It also departs from the conventional narrative of the rise and fall of capital cities, instead focusing on the layers of history that make up the various sites — Mehrauli, Shahjahanabad, Nizamuddin, New Delhi and others. It invites the viewer to see the history of the city as an integral part of the lived experience of those who inhabit it," says Swapna.

The festival commences with steps along Qudsia Bagh, returning to the site of the historic Indian Art Exhibition of the 1903 Delhi Durbar, which led to subsequent rich confluences in the art and culture, paving the way for the establishment of important institutions, including Lalit Kala Akademi and the Sangeet Natak Akademi.

Says Ashish Anand, CEO and MD of DAG, "A city is a living legacy of its history and culture in which art plays an important part alongside other streams and components, some of which are more visibly acknowledged than others. With The City as a Museum, we open doors and windows to parallels and conversations that are immersive, educational and investigative but also engaging and fun."

Each event composing the festival traces the trajectory of the artful evolution of Delhi, conversing through artworks from the DAG collection, including the creations by Satish Gujral, Krishen Khanna, and Tyeb Mehta, all of whom mark their centenary this year. Then there are works by Devayani Krishna, Kanwal Krishna, Madhvi Parekh, B C Sanyal, G R Santosh, A Ramachandran, Gogi Saroj Pal, Shobha Broota and more, viewing

the city through their experiential lens.

The brick is the leitmotif of the city that is always a conversation in progress. An ode to the publishing crucible in old Delhi, A Bibliophile's Bazaar leads you on a walk along the iconic Daryaganj Sunday Book market with Kanupriya Dhingra and Sohail Hashmi, tracing cultural points and bringing in a discussion at the Kathika Cultural Centre on the historical aspects of this area. There is also a revisiting of Delhi in the wake of the Revolt of 1857 through photographs and interactive formats. Several other carefully conceived events, including pop-up exhibitions, audio trails, panel discussions and performances are part of the festival. Leading historians, scholars, collectors, archivists, and artists such as Rudrangshu Mukherjee, Naman Ahuja, Giles Tillotson, Kanupriya Dhingra, Sohail Hashmi, Sudhanva Deshpande, Moloyashree Hashmi, Amitesh Grover, Madan Gopal Singh, Ram Rahman, Zuleikha Chaudhari, and others are part of the initiative.

In another unique effort, The Fifth Circle: Echo Route will be presented as an immersive audio walk created by Amitesh Grover through the iconic Mandi House, a confluence of culture, history and heritage. From Windsor Palace to Jawahar Bhawan and Triveni Kala Sangam, the spectrum of events spans the historical largesse of the city. A salute to the ages in a city that has always been a fountainhead of power.

The events under Sair-e-Delhi: Chronicles of Change will continue till September 21, 2025.

EYE ON DESIGN

Threads stitched with reverence

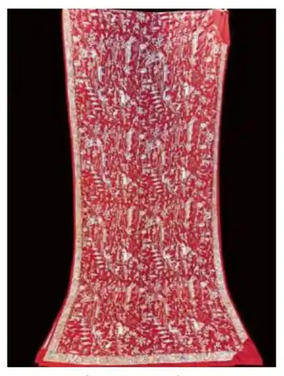
The resurgence of Parsi embroidery underscores its timelessness. It thrives because it is more than just thread and fabric: it is memory and identity, says Bhuvana Shridhar

Parsi embroidery has woven its spell across centuries and continents, shimmering its way from heirloom trunks to haute couture runways. Also known as Parsi Gara, this embroidery is much more than ornamentation; it is a chronicle of journeys, migrations, and cultural confluences. From boutiques and bridal trousseaus to elegant home décor, its intricate beauty continues to unfold everywhere. The story begins in Persia (modern-day Iran), where this art form first took root. When the Parsi community migrated to India between the 8th and 10th centuries, they carried with them not only their faith but also their craft traditions. As caravans traversed the storied Silk Road, they brought in influences from China. Thus, Parsi embroidery emerged as a unique fusion: Chinese motifs and techniques interwoven with Persian refinement, eventually finding a home in India. Over time, generations of artisans imbued it with mythology, symbolism, and a deep reverence for nature, ensuring that each piece carried not just thread, but meaning.

Embroidered souvenirs from Kerman in Iran.

The art of the Gara

What distinguishes Parsi embroidery is its meticulous technique and lyrical motifs. Traditionally worked on fine fabrics like silk or georgette, the process begins with sketches drawn on paper and sample colours tested. The designs are then traced onto the fabric, and fine needles are used to render motifs in lustrous silk threads. Warp and weft threads create the sturdy canvas, while satin stitches, French knots, and other detailing build the characteristic depth and shimmer of the famous Gara. Textile designer Ashdeen Lilaowala, who has been at the forefront of reviving and contemporising this art, emphasises that wearability is key. "We always emphasise on drape and fall of the fabric such that every sari or garment we create is easy to move in, even if adorned with heavy embroidery," he says. His favourite canvases include silk crêpes, satins, jacquards, and organza — luxurious fabrics that allow the embroidery to come alive.



Antique Parsi gara. PIC COURTESY: AJAY BHOJ

The lexicon of Parsi embroidery is as rich as its history. Its motifs range from animals and birds to flowers, mythical creatures, and even cosmic elements. Every motif is steeped in symbolism, carrying messages of belief, blessing, or aspiration. The butterfly, for instance, is more than an aesthetic flourish. It signifies transformation, growth, and renewal. In the Gara tradition, it also represents longevity and a happy marriage. Butterflies often appear with satin-stitched wings and French-knotted antennae, gracing saris, coats, scarves, or even table runners.

Birds, too, play a vital role. The simurgh or phoenix, borrowed from Persian mythology, symbolises health and loyalty. The rooster, favoured on children's garments, embodies victory over darkness, crowing each morning to announce the triumph of light. Floral motifs, meanwhile, embody beauty, harmony, and spiritual significance. The chrysanthemum, or Kiku, introduced via Chinese influence, is associated with autumn and long life. Borders of saris often feature Ava Yazad, the angel of water, accompanied by water lilies — delicate evocations of purity and renewal. These patterns are not merely decorative; they are prayers stitched into fabric.

While Parsi embroidery thrived through the 19th and early 20th centuries, industrialisation and shifting tastes threatened its survival. Yet, passionate revivalists are ensuring it does not fade into obscurity.

Artisan Ajay Bhoj from New Delhi is dedicated to reviving the exquisite Cheena Chini Gara, a vintage treasure nearly a century old. These masterpieces, often created by Parsi women, depict scenes of bygone eras — majestic ships, mythological tales, flora, and fauna — rendered with vegetable dyes and untwisted Chinese silk threads. Bhoj's work not only restores these heirlooms but also reminds us of the painstaking artistry and imagination that defined them. If tradition safeguards the soul of Parsi embroidery, innovation is what gives it wings today. As fashion sensibilities evolve, designers like Ashdeen are expanding the art's vocabulary without compromising its essence. This innovation extends beyond saris. Gara embroidery now embellishes lehengas, jackets, blouses, scarves, and even accessories. Its motifs are stylised, colour palettes reimagined to suit modern tastes, and fabrics lightened to increase wearability. What was once reserved for ceremonial wear now steps comfortably into daily fashion and contemporary design. From adapting motifs to suit individual preferences to blending embroidery with minimalism for modern wardrobes, artisans are discovering new audiences.

The resurgence of Parsi embroidery underscores its timelessness. It thrives because it is more than just thread and fabric: it is memory, mythology, artistry, and identity. Designers like Ashdeen and revivalists like Bhoj are demonstrating how heritage can be preserved not as relics but as living traditions.

DISCOVER INDIAN ART

Kalamkari rumal: Romance and revelry on a kerchief

Vegetal and geometric patterning on the coats, skirts, and patkas worn by the figures in the rumal showcase the remarkable diversity of textile production in early modern South Asia

Details in the Kalamkari rumal, Deccan, India, c 1640-50. PICS COURTESY: MET MUSEUM

Kalamkari is a textile tradition from southern India where cotton fabrics are hand-painted with pictorial narratives using a bamboo pen known as kalam. While the exact point of origin for kalamkari remains unknown, the oldest surviving samples of this craft are dated from the 15th and 16th centuries, when Machilipatnam, along the Coromandel coast in present-day Andhra Pradesh, emerged as a major hub of kalamkari production and trade.

The process of making kalamkari consists of 23 steps, including treating the fabric by bleaching it and then softening it, sun-drying, preparing natural dyes, hand-painting, air drying, washing and finishing. Some of the earliest examples of kalamkari depict religious and mythological themes, for use in Hindu temples and monasteries. However, by the early modern period, secular narratives became popular for trade and courtly use.

This 17th-century kalamkari rumal or kerchief (*see pics*) is attributed to Jai Singh I of Amber, Rajasthan, who served in the Deccan as the Mirza Raja or senior general of the Mughal empire. Made in the fortified city of Golconda, in present-day Hyderabad, it belongs to a set of three, whose markings indicate they were part of the royal Amber storehouse. Rumals such as these may have been used as furnishings, coverings for trays bearing gifts or simply as decorative fabrics for personal use or collection.

Kalamkari artisans in the Coromandel were not a part of karkhanas or royal ateliers, but their visual repertoire borrowed from the miniatures of Deccan and Mughal courts. In this intricate rumal, scenes of dance, drink and desire capture the essence of courtly life. Lush flowering plants, deer, cheetahs, leopards, insects and a variety of birds surround celebratory vignettes. Towards the centre stand a pair of lovers in embrace, with beasts of prey feasting on a carcass nearby. A total of eleven figures are depicted, some with glasses of wine in their hands and others in repose, sometimes flanked by attendants offering food and pouring drinks from decorated jars, surrounded by butterflies and blooms. Bedecked in jewels and luxurious clothes, these courtly figures revel in the fantastical landscape of the natural world.

Its floral border borrows from the hashiyas or ornate edges of Mughal miniatures and architectural inlay work, while the figures are etched in the traditional Deccani style. Vegetal and geometric patterning on the jamas, coats, skirts and patkas worn by the figures provides a window into the sheer diversity of textile production in early modern South Asia.

Variegated turban styles indicate various courtly traditions — Mughal, Bijapur, Golconda, Rajput — inhabiting a dynamic landscape of socio-economic and political change. With fluttering butterflies and birds perching on branches or on the arms of revellers, the vitality of nature complements the luxury and hedonism of courtly life in early modern India. And the canvas of earthy tones — the distinct reds and blues — is a reminder of the unbroken textile tradition of the multi-step resist-dyeing method, which is used to make kalamkari textiles to this day.

Arundhati Chauhan, MAP Academy

Discover Indian Art *is a monthly column that delves into fascinating stories on art from across the subcontinent, curated by the editors of the MAP Academy. Find them on Instagram as @map_academy*

Printed and published by B A Ravi on behalf of The Printers (Mysore) Private Ltd, at The Printers (Mysore) Private Ltd, Plot nos. 7-12, Kumbalgodu Industrial Area, Bengaluru - 560 074. Executive Editor: K V Subramanya (Responsible for selection of news under the PRB Act). Editorial Office: 75, M.G. Road, Bengaluru - 560 001. E-mail: editor@deccanherald.co.in. Phone: 080-45557333, Editorial: 080-45557279/080-45557280, Circ: 080-45557204, Advt: 080-45557163/080-45557164. Also printed at Hubballi-Dharwad, Mangaluru, Kalaburagi, Davangere, Mysuru and Hosapete. © All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited. RNI No 3608/57. Registered, Regn. No: KRNA/BGE/1027/2023-2025, posted at Bangalore PSO, Mysore Road, Bengaluru - 560 026. Website: www.printersmysore.com